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ABSTRACT

This document contains 22 papers presented at a conference on practices in adult higher education. Representative papers include the following: "The Classroom as a Model of Social Justice" (Keith B. Armstrong, Susan A. Timm); "Adult Students with Learning Disorders and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders" (Richard Ashbrook, Jody Founrier, Jeanette McDonald, Tanya Poteet); "Teaching for Wisdom: Is It Possible?" (Caroline Bassett); "Thorny Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Fairness When Evaluating Portfolio Assessment" (Nancy J. Cooledge, Jocelyn J. Cooledge, Kimberly Weihe); "Using Portfolio Assessment for General Education in an Adult Degree Program" (Sharon Bailey Drury, Cynthia Tweedell); "A Partnership in Health Professions Education: Connections between the United States and Israel" (Charles W. Ford, Lucia F. Miree); "Quality Learning and Adult Transformative Development" (Roxanne M. Gonzales, Jayne Pelletier); "Using Comprehensive Portfolios to Encourage Self-Managed Learning and Assess Program Outcomes" (Roberta Hartmann, Andrew Carlson); "Adults with Learning Disabilities: A Developmental Perspective" (Sandra Johnson); "Assessing for Metacognition Competencies in an Adult Degree Completion Program" (Roberta Albom Liebler); "Outcomes and Quality: Assessment Is the Key to Success" (Jane A. Long); "Do Faculty Gear the Language of Distance Education Web Courses to Adult Learners?" (Evan S. Smith); "A Study of Adult Learners' Persistence and Success in Accelerated and Traditional Programs" (Raymond J. Wlodkowski); and "Assessment of Student Learning: Implications for Teachers and Learners" (Kathryn Gleason Cook). A conference program included in the packet contains summaries of the papers. (KC)

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Access to Quality and Success: Applying Principles of Good Practice

Program [and] Proceedings
of the
Adult Higher Education Alliance/American Council on Education
20th Annual Conference

Chicago, Illinois

October 4-7, 2000

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Program

AHEA

20th Annual
Alliance/ACE Conference

The Adult Higher Education Alliance and the American Council Education presents:

Access to Quality and Success: Applying Principles of Good Practice

October 4-7 2000
The Congress Plaza Hotel & Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois

NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

National-Louis University

De Paul University
School for New Learning

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Welcome to the Adult Higher Education ALLIANCE/ACE CONFERENCE!

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Adult Higher Education Alliance, the American Council on Education and the 2000 Conference Planning Committee, I want to welcome each of you to Chicago. As the 20th Annual Conference, Access to Quality and Success: Applying Principles of Good Practice convenes to reflect on the principles that govern our programs and how they are evaluated, we want to thank you in advance for your contributions, your lively and thoughtful participation, and your dedication to this organization. This conference offers us the opportunity to learn, to contribute, and to grow. It's time to dig in for the benefit of our adult students. Enjoy.

Best regards,

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Regis University

Main Schedule

Wednesday, October 4, 2000

8:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Registration	Florentine Room
10:00 - 12:00 p.m.	Alliance Board Meeting	Belmont Room
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Board Lunch	Plaza Room
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Board Meeting Open Session	Belmont Room
6:00 - 8:30 p.m.	Informal Networking Reception Sponsored by National-Louis Univ.	Florentine Room

Thursday, October 5, 2000

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Florentine Room
8:00 - 8:45 a.m.	Newcomers Welcome Session Kent Warren, Leader	Lincoln Room
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks: Concordia University; DePaul University-School for New Learning; National-Louis University; North Park University; Conference Chair.	Florentine Room
9:30 - 10:45 a.m.	Opening Address: Steve Crow Executive Director, the North Central Association of Colleges & Schools	Florentine Room
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	Refreshment Break	
11:00 - 12:15 p.m.	Panel: Jean Morse, Middle States Association; Susan Mancuso, Chair, Dept. of Adult and Higher Education, Western Washington University; Ruth Frey, CAEL's ALFI Project; Susanne Dumbleton, Dean, DePaul School for New Learning.	Florentine Room
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.	Lunch: Scholarship Awards and Alliance Update, Patricia Brewer, President; Beverly Firestone Remembered, Catherine Marienau, Colleague.	Windsor Room
2:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Concurrent Session I—Schedule Follows	
3:15 - 3:30 p.m.	Refreshment Break	Florentine Room
3:30 - 4:45 p.m.	Concurrent Session II—Schedule Follows	
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Dinner & Entertainment: Kristin Lems, Singer & Songwriter	Gold Room

Main Schedule

Friday, October 6, 2000

7:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Registration	Florentine Room
7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Florentine Room
8:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Conference 2001 Planning Session; Other Interest Groups Meet As Announced	
9:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Concurrent Session III—Schedule Follows	
10:15 - 10:45 a.m.	Refreshment Break	Florentine Room
10:45 - 12:00 p.m.	Concurrent Session IV	Schedule Follows
12:15 - 2:00 p.m.	Lunch: "Preliminary Findings on the Alliance in the National Discourse on Adult Higher Education: the First 25 Years," Andrew Carlson & Amanda Williamsen, Capital U; Sheryl Stacy, Bluffton College, and Sandie Turner, Carlow College	Florentine Room
2:15 - 4:15 p.m.	Concurrent Workshops Workshop A: "Teaching with Development in Mind."	Lincoln Room
	Workshop B: "Prior Learning Assessment: Basic Training and Discussion."	Grant Park Room
	No refreshment break. Participants are free to make their own dinner arrangements. Check at Registration Desk to join in group reservations.	
Evening Free!	Enjoy Chicago.	

Saturday, October 7, 2000

7:30 - 12:00 p.m.	Registration Table Open	Florentine Room
7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Florentine Room
9:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Concurrent Sessions V—As Scheduled	
10:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Refreshment Break	Florentine Room
10:30 - 12:00 p.m.	Alliance Business Meeting	Lincoln Room
12:15 - 2:00 p.m.	Lunch: President's Panel: "Principles: Where do we go from here?" James Harrington, Prof Of AE, ADP, Mary Baldwin College; Kent Wrren, Associate Director, Graduate Programs, Intercultural Communications Institute, Portland, OR; Patricia Brewer, Experience-based Education, Sinclair Community College, Dayton, OH; Pauline Coffman, Director, School of Continuing Studies, North Park University.	Florentine Room

Session Schedule

Session One—Thursday, October 5, 2000, 2-3:15 p.m.

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Shelby	Craig A. Mealman Randee Lipson Lawrence	National-Louis Univ.	You've Come a Long Way Baby: The Roots and Renaissance of Cohort-based Accelerated Learning.
Carter	Oto Jones Susan Oaks Karen Pass Mary Ellen Shaughnessy	Empire State College	Educational Planning: Going Online
Lincoln	Sandra Johnson	Empire State College	Adults with Learning Disabilities: A Developmental Perspective.
	Gerd Ekland	Järfälla Komvux Dyslexia Clinic	Respondent
	Marianne Frithiof		Respondent
Grant Park	Roxanne M. Gonzales Jayne Pelletier	The College of Lifelong Learning: University System of New Hampshire	Quality Learning and Adult Transformative Development.
Lake Shore	Cynthia Benn Tweedell	Indiana Wesleyan Univ.	Retention in Accelerated Degree-Completion Programs

Session Two—Thursday, October 5, 2000, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Shelby	Kathryn G. Cook	North Park University	Assessment of Student Learning: Implications for Teaching and Learning.
Carter	Jean S. Moeller	National-Louis Univ.	A Research Study to Discover Temperament Types, Communication Styles, and Learning Styles of Adult Learners in Non-Traditional and Online Learning Environments.
Lincoln	Richard Ashbrook Jody Fournier Janette McDonald Tanya Poteet *The authors acknowledge the contribution of Jason Mogle, an undergraduate student at Capital University, who assisted with an early draft of this paper.	Capital University	Adult Students with Learning Disorders and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders.
Grant Park	Faye Lesht David Schejbal	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Good Practice in Continuing Higher Education Program Development.
Lake Shore	Jane A. Long	Carlow College	Outcomes and Quality: Assessment is the Key to Success.

Session Three—Friday, October 6, 2000, 9-10:15 a.m.

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Shelby	Catherine Marsh	North Park University	Transformational Education Through the Convergence of Creativity, Care, Courage and Community.
Carter	Sharon Drury Cynthia Tweedell	Aurora University	Using Portfolio Assessment for General Education in an Adult Degree Program.

Session Schedule

Session Three—Friday, October 6, 2000, 9-10:15 a.m. *continued*

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Lincoln	Xenia Coulter	SUNY Empire State College	Women's Knowledge.
Grant Park	Koby Lee	North Park University	Persistence on a Smaller Scale: A Case Study Following Up on the 1999 New England Adult Research Network's "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Completion Programs."
Lake Shore	Roberta Alborn Liebler	Aurora University	Assessing for Metacognition Competencies in an Adult Degree Completon Program.

Session Four—Friday, October 6, 2000, 10:45-12 p.m.

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Shelby	Catherine Marsh	North Park University	Transformational Education
Shelby	Carolyn Bassett	The Wisdom Institute Walden University	Teaching for Wisdom—Is It Possible?
Carter	Nancy J. Cooledge Jocelyn J. Cooledge Kimberly Weihe	University of Sioux Falls	Thorny Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Fairness When Evaluating Portfolio Assessment.
Lincoln	Lee Bash Margie Martyn	Baldwin-Wallace College	A Case Study: Building an Empire by Walking the Dog—Revitalizing an Adult Program.
Grant Park	Raymond Wlodkowski	Regis University	A Study of Adult Learners' Persistence and Success I Accelerated and Traditional Programs.
Lake Shore	Breck A. Harris	Fresno Pacific University	Transferability of Curriculum Learning Outcomes from an Adult Baccalaureate Degree Completion Program by Alumni Leaders to their Workplace Setting.

Session Five—Saturday, October 7, 2000, 9-10:15 a.m.

Room	Presenter(s)	Institution	Title of Presentation
Shelby	Keith B. Armstrong Susan A. Timm	DePaul University School for New Learning Northern Illinois Univ.	The Classroom as a Model of Social Justice.
Carter	Roberta Hartmann Andrew Carlson	Capital University	Using Comprehensive Portfolios to Encourage Self-Managed Learning and Assess Program Outcomes.
Lincoln	Charles W. Ford Lucia F. Miree	The University of New England.	A Partnership in Health Professions Education: Connections Between the United States and Israel.
Grant Park	Evan Smith	University of Missouri at Columbia	Do Faculty Gear the Language of Distance Education Web Courses to Adult Learners?
Lake Shore	Elene P. Kent	Capital University	In Search of Excellence: Informal Observations of Adult Accounting Students' Perceptions of Quality and Assessment.

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The Classroom as a Model of Social Justice

The classroom is a model of social justice from which students evolve personal views and behavior. To investigate the impact of classroom environments, this study analyzes personal acquiescence to internal and external forms of oppression that erode a person's sense of autonomy and self-worth, with the purposes of enabling people to overcome the impact of their oppressive experiences. Participatory research was the modified method used to identify and find resolution to these oppressions that participants in the project experienced. This method permitted individuals to gain knowledge to empower themselves against oppressive forces.

Eight ethnographic categories of oppression emerged from the research group: (1) physical, (2) mental/psychological, (3) racial, (4) gender, (5) sexual orientation, (6) socio-economic, class, or national origin, (7) handicapped/physically challenged, and (8) institutional.

Eight categories of oppression resolution emerged from the group: (1) the use of greater education (elevation of the populace's awareness), (2) the recognition of people's differences (difference causes unique internal struggles); (3) the process of becoming proactive to overcome past fears, (4) the use of money as a source of power and respect, (5) the use of legal action, (6) the possibility that no resolution exists for oppression, (7) the use of common ground for dissimilar groups, and (8) the presence of time as natural cure.

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Adult Students with Learning Disorders and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders

Adult students, compared to their traditional counterparts, may be more likely to have a higher incidence of Learning Disorders (LD) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD). Indeed, higher education's failure to identify and serve disabled students may be a primary reason that many adult learners never completed their undergraduate studies, instead opting for the work world where natural, compensatory strategies permitted effective and successful careers by placing a premium on broad performance outcomes. Since the adoption of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), educational institutions have been specifically prohibited against discriminating against individuals with disabilities. Surprisingly, relatively few adult degree programs have become pioneers in teaching adult learners with disabilities despite the apparent goodness-of-fit between alternative delivery formats and the special needs of students with disabilities.

The paper will consider three aspects of working with adult students with LD and ADHD. (1) Higher education's obligations under the ADA will be discussed, including the provision for nonstandard testing conditions. The ADA's term "qualified individual with a disability" and the "essential requirements" clause will be discussed. (2) Participants will be introduced to the defining characteristics of LD and ADHD so that they are better able to detect and refer students with disabilities. (3) Adult learning theory will be mentioned that establishes a pedagogical foundation compatible with serving the needs of students with LD and ADHD.

Just as adult development models have led to the empowerment of adult learners, we invite our readers to wonder why our non-traditional, alternative delivery programs have not consciously extended the reach of practice to "disabled" populations. By challenging higher education's epistemological and pedagogical assumptions about the learning disabled, we might again exert our change-agent role, and in partnership with our students, our "disabled" students, stretch our collective agency toward transforming assumptions about higher education and the individuals it serves.

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A Case Study: Building an Empire By Walking The Dog—Revitalizing An Adult Program

Introduction

An explanation: "Building an empire" refers to bringing an established adult degree and certificate program to a new level so that its mission is more consistent with national trends, bench marks, and best practices. "Walking the dog" is a reflection of service orientation as defined by the famous department store, Nordstrams.

Demographics suggest that colleges and universities have begun to encounter some dramatic shifts in the makeup of their student body. Some sources expect that more than 50% of the total enrollment in these institutions will be 25 years or older by the year 2005. Although this will require significant adjustments on most campuses, adult programs that have been maintaining a status-quo approach may be facing even greater challenges than most. Their task: to create a dynamic program that is competitive and appealing yet rigorous and based on excellence. This case study examines how one such program is addressing these issues.

Background

Baldwin-Wallace College (B-W) is a liberal arts college located outside Cleveland, Ohio. It has offered degrees for adult learners since the mid-1940s. Approximately eleven years ago, its adult student enrollment achieved its highest level and since then, has endured a steady decline characterized by approximately 400 fewer students at the end of the 1999 school year. At that point, after having assessed the viability of the program, the administration decided to strengthen its commitment by bringing in fresh leadership with a mandate for positive change.

The Empire

The first step towards building a new "empire" entailed a careful assessment of the extant program. Focus groups, analyses of data obtained from various internal sources and publications, and a survey that was distributed to all adult students were utilized in order to gain a clear picture of practices and structure. Once these were examined, the program initiated a strategic plan containing mission statement, vision statement, SWOT analysis, and list of objectives. This information was compiled as a booklet that was distributed to all members of the faculty and staff at the college, since identity was determined to be one of the primary problems for the program. Additional outreach efforts were systematically undertaken in order to increase both the dialogue and number of new initiatives needed to create a more dynamic program. At the conclusion of the first year, enrollment trends had been reversed along with more than twenty-five new initiatives in operation - setting in motion even more dramatic changes for the future.

Walking The Dog

There is ample evidence that one of the leading factors in attracting and retaining students in today's competitive environment relies on increasing convenience and/or service. The B-W adult program has embraced this strategy at all levels - from increasing scheduling options tenfold to such simple ideas as providing free apples prior to classes each day. Although many of these efforts have simply relied on common sense and been based upon information gathered in surveys, exit interviews, and focus groups, some were derived through an ongoing process of brainstorming and encouragement to think "outside the box."

Results

In the year since B-W first made its commitment to upgrading this program, a significant number of events have confirmed that the program is enjoying reinvigoration. In addition to a turnaround in enrollment, the number of options available to adult learners has significantly increased as well. As a result, the program has enjoyed a level of vitality not previously encountered.

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Teaching for Wisdom: Is It Possible?

Wisdom is difficult to study because of its complexity and the multiple meanings associated with it. In a phenomenological study I have interviewed about two dozen people about their understanding of wisdom and what it means to them. Their responses have been organized into three components of wisdom, mostly but not entirely congruent with some of the major literature on the topic. These components are: discernment (cognitive qualities), empathy and engagement (affective and conative qualities), and strength of character, which does not correspond to any previous research and which includes such "being" qualities as integrity, honest, self-knowledge, and self-transcendence.

Can wisdom be taught? I have suggested some ideas, based on my research. In general, the more a person can become more cognitively complex with more inclusive and undistorted meaning perspectives, then the more that person will move towards becoming wiser.

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Assessment of Student Learning: Implications for Teachers and Learners

Programmatic and institutional change in adult higher education continues to evolve in concert with the explication of practice standards at those levels, including those related to assessment of student learning. However, translation of those principles to the teaching-learning enterprise at the classroom level has been neither explicit nor driven by coherent models. A careful examination of successful classroom practices with adult learners suggests that components of such models are likely to include a consideration of a distinction between learning and performance, concepts and skills associated with postformal cognitive development, principles of consultation practice and the Kolb model for adult learning.

Using two courses (Adult Development and Psychobiology) in an accelerated degree-completion program for adult learners as examples, this presentation discusses an emerging paradigm shift in the delivery of specific educational products at the classroom level in which assessment of student learning is central to the educational endeavor. Although a coherent model for this classroom practice has not been built, some plausible components will be suggested, several issues or areas needing theoretical underpinning will be identified, and specific implications for learners and faculty will be explored.

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Thorny Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Fairness When Evaluating Portfolio Assessment

Portfolio assessment is a popular topic in adult education literature. Much has been written about using portfolios to document learning in a program, increase student responsibility for their learning, shift the role of the instructor, teach self-evaluation, and merge assessment and instruction. Recognition of the benefits has resulted in colleges and universities utilizing portfolio assessment to make decisions concerning students and programs. Thorny issues must be addressed, however, to enhance the credibility of portfolio assessment.

While articles and books are plentiful on how to develop portfolios, most offer only general hints as to scoring and evaluating the portfolios in context. Rarely, if at all, are the issues of validity and fairness addressed, and reliability is usually discussed only in terms of interrater reliability. If portfolio assessment is utilized to evaluate learning, then this type of assessment must be valid, reliable, and fair for all concerned.

When evaluating adult learners and programs using portfolio assessment, it is necessary to have reasonable confidence that the process is really measuring what it purports to be measuring (validity), is measuring the characteristics consistently (reliability), and is not unduly effected by bias and other contaminating factors (fairness). Therefore, it is essential to follow a series of procedures to increase the validity, reliability, and fairness of portfolio assessment in adult learning courses and programs. The following paper discusses steps for enhancing reliability, validity, and fairness in portfolio assessment at the post-secondary level.

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Using Portfolio Assessment for General Education in an Adult Degree Program

This presentation describes the process of using a portfolio system for assessment of general education in a multi-site, accelerated adult degree program. At Indiana Wesleyan University, a new mission statement precipitated a review of General Education outcomes. The university-wide General Education Committee specified student outcomes, which were derived from the mission statement. A General Education Assessment Plan for Adult and Professional Studies was written which ties the specific program objectives to university outcome objectives. The primary means of assessment is the Personal Learning Anthology, an authentic assessment measure. This presentation describes the development process and components of the Personal Learning Anthology.
In an adult program there is a special challenge to demonstrate that students are gaining skills that they did not have before entering the program. To do this, the portfolio contains several pre/post assessments. Rubrics are written by the faculty in order to standardize evaluation of the portfolio submissions. There is a mid-point check to make sure students are keeping up with the submissions. The final portfolio is included in the computation of the grade for the last General Education class.

On an Annual Assessment Day, a representative sampling of portfolios are reviewed by teams of three faculty. Their evaluations measure the growth of students in basic skill areas. The results are discussed by General Education faculty, who suggest program improvements.

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A Partnership in Health Professions Education:Connections between the United States and Israel

Like most academic institutions of higher education today, the University of New England (UNE) has entered into the world of non-traditional education. It has established programs such as Saturday course offerings in compressed formats, evening and weekend courses, distance education degrees (including videotapes, distant projects, and mail responses), and internet/on-line programs. One of its more innovative endeavors has been a project undertaken with a partner in Israel in which health professions education programs are delivered in both the United States and in Israel.

Working nurses in Israel are under a government mandate to complete their baccalaureate degrees to retain their licensing and remain employed. In response to this, three years ago, UNE started delivering its degree completion programs in both nursing and health services management to students in Israel at branch campuses in Haifa, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv. Students take courses one day per week, studying in Israel for nine months and in the United States for six weeks during the summer. Thirty-four students graduated in 1998, 125 in 1999, and another 250 will graduate in November 2000.

This innovative program, which uses both UNE faculty and qualified faculty from Israel, has been designed to meet the needs of a working adult population and it provides students with exposure to both the health care system of the United States and that of Israel. Both faculty and students are exposed to the educational approaches and learning techniques from both cultures. For these reasons, it has been a successful and challenging program for our institution.

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Quality Learning and Adult Transformative Development

Education-versus- training, a debate that persists from both the traditional higher education sector and the corporate training sector. What differentiates higher education from training? According to Scott (1997), higher education is concerned with attaining intellectual and critical thinking skills, as opposed to attaining job-specific skills, often referred to as career education. However, with new models of adult learning emerging, is it possible that the debate is outdated? The employee of today needs to possess those skills once considered the domain of education: the ability to acquire and utilize information, identify and organize resources, work with others, interpret information, and understand complex interrelationships (Evers et al. 1998). If this is the case, then educators and trainers alike should begin to develop programs and curriculum that fosters transformational development in their adult learners.

This presentation paper suggests that the models of education and training are blending into a new model of adult learning theory, which is capable of fostering transformative development in adult learners in both the higher education and corporate training environment. Poledink's (1997) model, referred to as "quality learning," will serve as the framework to demonstrate how the education and training models can be blended. This model provides an opportunity for the implementation of transformational learning, thus enhancing the adult's transformational development. These concepts are explored through a discussion of current workforce trends, a review of education and training models, defining transformational learning, a discussion on quality learning, and concludes with a discussion on implementing quality-learning to foster transformational development.

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Transferability of Curriculum Learning Outcomes from an Adult Baccalaureate Degree Completion Program by Alumni Leaders to their Workplace Setting

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of alumni leaders from the Management and Organization Development (MOD) program at Fresno Pacific University (FPU) about their application of twenty-seven leadership outcomes in Modules Two, Three, Seven, and Eight to their workplace setting. To complete this research, a random sample of 185 students from the MOD program at FPU was surveyed.

Four research questions were developed, with each pertaining to a specific course module, including Organizations and Environments, Group and Organizational Behavior, Human Resources Administration, and Principles of Management and Supervision. The research questions examined to what degree of frequency learning outcomes in each module were applied by alumni leaders to their workplace setting.

Based on survey responses, three learning outcomes were found to be "frequently applied" in the respondent's workplace setting including How Key Elements of Culture Impact Organizations, Effective Leadership Requires Being Situational, and Interpersonal Communication. There were twenty-four learning outcomes that were rated as "occasionally applied." No learning outcomes were rated as "rarely applied" or "never applied."

The author recommends elimination of some learning outcomes in the Human Resources Administration and the Principles of Management and Supervision Modules that did not effectively contribute to the leadership of alumni. The author also recommends more leadership-oriented, interpersonal, intrapersonal, communication and processing skills, simulations, role-playing, videotaping, communication, critical thinking, and technology should be added to the MOD program. Implementation of individual learning contracts should also be considered.

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Using Comprehensive Portfolios to Encourage Self-Managed Learning and Assess Program Outcomes

Throughout the past year, the authors have been developing and testing the use of a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio. The comprehensive portfolio, unlike traditional portfolios which demonstrate learning in one area (usually a single college course), provides a map of the student's post secondary learning experience. Included in this map are a degree plan, an assessment of learning style and skills, journals, and significant papers. The authors hypothesize that the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will (1) encourage students to view their learning as a whole; (2) become a tool to help instructors and advisors identify, direct, and support the learner's research interests; and (3) serve as a tool for program assessment. In this paper, the authors explain their assumptions about the use of this kind of learning portfolio and report the limited results of three semesters of testing and future plans to test the success of a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio.

AHEA 20th Annual Alliance/ACE Conference

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Adults With Learning Disabilities: A Developmental Perspective

Gerber and Reiff (1994) estimate that 5-20% of the population is affected by a learning disability. Henderson stated, "the percentage of fulltime college students who have indicated that they have a learning disability is 25%" (quoted in Shaprino and Rich 1999). Utilizing Meizrow's (1990) theme of, "adult education is reparative education," this paper addresses the conceptual principles of non-traditional postsecondary adult education, as the underpinnings or guiding principles whereby, mentors can go on this reparative journey, with adults who have learning disabilities. Drawing upon: Knowles' (1980) four assumptions and seven process elements of andragogy; areas of knowledge concerning adult learning disabilities; the impact of life and transition developmental tasks on adult learning; developmental aspects of classroom trauma commonly occurring throughout the education of a child with learning disabilities, and an adult learning program in place, for adults with learning disabilities in a postsecondary education setting, a conceptual program model for adults with learning disabilities is presented for mentors engaged in non-traditional adult education. This conceptual program takes into consideration the Zone of Proximal Development in the mentor-student relationship, the awakening of metacognition and self-reflection, and alternative methods of instruction and assessment. The argument is given that adult educators in non-traditional settings already have in place the theoretical knowledge and practice, to instill hope and encourage the developmental journey of reparative adult education.

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In Search of Excellence: Informal Observations of Adult Accounting Students' Perceptions of Quality and Assessment

Capital University's business department is in the process of gathering data concerning its program in preparation for ACBSP accreditation. In conjunction with our self-study, the accounting faculty in the Cleveland Adult Degree Program Center have discussed and are faced with decisions regarding current and future delivery of the courses, as well as how the learning outcomes of accounting courses should be assessed.

Both accounting faculty and learners define quality of instruction in terms of measurable outcomes. Faculty observations of students and learning outcomes in the program have led them to consider a change to weekly meetings (instead of alternate weeks) and more in-class testing of accounting theory, as they have sensed deficiencies in the learning of accounting theory in recent terms. As some faculty attempted to gradually make these changes during the Spring 2000 term, learner resistance to more meetings and in-class testing was observed.

This presentation and paper discusses the results of an informal survey of the adult accounting students in the Cleveland Center and their perceptions of quality in accounting education and the assessment of learning outcomes. As experienced adult educators might expect, the findings indicate learners' strong emphasis on the relevancy of their education to the workplace as well as their feeling that instructors in accounting should themselves be credentialed accounting practitioners, so that instruction will be delivered in a more meaningful way. They also indicated that the use of case studies and testing were reasonable measures for assessment of accounting theory.

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Assessing for Metacognition Competencies in an Adult Degree Completion Program

A successful adult higher education program produces learning that is far greater than the sum of its parts. However, when qualitative transformations face off with quantitative assessment, the meta-outcomes may be short changed. In the rush to demonstrate that each course is achieving its stated goals, the macro-competencies are often overlooked. A checklist of programmatic outcomes often fails to address those very competencies that define educated adults who are able to contribute at high levels as individuals, professionals, family members, community participants, and world citizens.

Some adult higher education programs have developed approaches to defining and assessing overarching overcomes. Bench marking colleges serve as models of best practice (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 1999). However, for many programs a more modest, but no less important process, is necessary. This workshop will explain a successful process of organizing individual classroom assessment squares into a patterned quilt with transparent meta-outcome seams. In the process of considering overarching outcomes, the faculty become more informed adult educators. No longer only specialists in their narrow discipline, faculty come to view themselves also as a team whose goal is to stimulate a transformational process. The way they think about learning changes.

Workshop participants will use this example to activate a dialogue about defining and assessing the meta-outcomes in their programs. We will discuss how the process will encourage systematic thinking in learners - both students and faculty.

AHEA 20th Annual Alliance/ACE Conference

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Outcomes and Quality: Assessment is the Key to Success

Quality in higher/adult education is difficult to pinpoint. As educators, we like to believe that quality education is obtained when the transfer of knowledge successfully occurs between educator and learner. However, this is only one aspect of the entire learning experience. Past measurements of educational quality have been weak and linear. These measurements usually consist of a survey or a form of classroom observation. I argue that the real key to measuring quality and achieving expected outcomes in the classroom is through new methods of assessment.

Assessment tools and methods come in many forms. In learning institutions and business alike these tools include and are not limited to oral and written exams, written exercises/projects, oral participation and presentations, written papers, oral/group exercises and projects. These tools are designed to access the transfer of knowledge from educator to learner. However, other tools of assessment are utilized to measure the quality of the overall learning experience, which also contributes to the transfer of knowledge. Several evaluation tools from both institutions for higher learning and business were evaluated and the key commonality was that they were subjective measurements of performance.

Newer forms of assessment (online) are making a grand entrance into both the business world and educational environments. These assessments are objective and emphasize outcomes rather than opinions. This paper evaluates a few of these tools and discusses their possible applications in both educational institutions and business.

The outcomes of two software application classes were compared utilizing basically the same methods of assessment. One class was held in a traditional, face-to-face environment while the other was completely online with the only forms of communication being e-mail and chat discussions. The outcomes of these assessments have been statistically analyzed and compared and graphically represented. Overall, the assessments showed that the students in the online environment outperformed the students in the traditional environment. Further research will continue for the next nine months to ascertain the validity of these results.

Quality control procedures are typically clearly defined for businesses. In the 1990's, Total Quality Management revolutionized the approach to quality control in businesses both nationally and internationally. Institutions for learning are a different story. In a report to the American Council on Education, Calvin Frazier states " While higher education has appeared to be content to judge teacher quality through course graded and a limited student teaching experience, policy makers have shifted to a results-oriented, standards-based approach and sought to align preparation (of teachers) more closely with the needs of students and schools. (Calvin, 1999). Institutions for higher learning are now beginning to see the value and necessity in providing a quality educational experience for each student. Assessments currently assist in measuring the quality of the learning experience. I believe that emerging assessment technologies will play an even larger role in the measurement of quality in educational environments.

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Transformational Education Through the Convergence of Creativity, Compassion, Courage and Community

The journey to Oz is a metaphor that holds the images necessary to describe the elements that constitute success in higher education:

* The rainbow - a symbol of the hope that must be kindled in the hearts and minds of students - "One of the tasks of the progressive educator is to unveil opportunities for hope" (Freire, Pedagogy of Hope).
* The tornado - a symbol of risk - the teacher must allow students to take risks - "To ask a learner to take a risk is to ask that person to make a deliberate personal encounter with the unknown".(Wlodkowski, Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn).
* The scarecrow - a symbol for creativity and critical thinking - "Anyone not prepared to look a little foolish now and again would be better not starting this path" (Whyte, The Heart Aroused).
* The tin man - a symbol for compassion - "In my experience, as people see more of the systems within which they operate, and as they understand more clearly the pressures influencing one another, the naturally develop more compassion and empathy" (Fox, A Spirituality Named Compassion).
* The lion - a symbol of courage - "If there is a sin against life, it consists perhaps not so much in despairing of life as in hoping for another life..."(Albert Camus).
* Dorothy - a symbol of community - (Senge, The Fifth Discipline, "There is nothing more powerful you can do to encourage others in their quest than to be serious in your own quest."
* The Wizard - a symbol of the transformed human being who having undergone personal transformation can point the way to others.

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You've Come a Long Way Baby: The Roots and Renaissance of Cohort-Based Accelerated Learning

Outstanding growth and success characterize the first twenty-three years of accelerated, cohort-based learning in adult higher education. These programs which began during the late 1970's, are now pervasive, influential forms of higher education developed specifically for adult learners.

While accelerated learning programs seriously consider the contemporary lives of adults in their scheduling and overall format options, it is the major philosophical and pedagogical assumptions that underlie cohort learning which make it continue to be so successful and vibrant as a learning opportunity in today's higher education market. Whereas the early program developers recognized the advantages of creating a supportive learning community with the cohort approach, the actual benefits of the cohort model for knowledge construction, individual and community development had yet to be realized. This presentation and paper examine the underlying philosophical assumptions about how and why we do what we do with this group of learners.

The authors reflect on their individual and collaborative experiences with teaching, researching, program development and administration of this form of adult education since 1983. Our practice includes accelerated field-based learning cohorts, campus-based cohorts, online cohorts, residential learning cohorts, interactive video, and weekend model cohorts in a wide variety of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs.

We invite readers and participants to interactively and reflectively examine their assumptions about learning, and explore the potential for further development of teaching and learning strategies for enhanced adult learning opportunities and outcomes in the third decade of program delivery.

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A Research Study to Discover Temperament Types, Communication Styles, and Learning Styles of Adult Learners in Non-traditional and Online Learning Environments

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to determine if patterns of temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles of adult learners existed in the non-traditional classroom learning environments and the online classroom learning environments. The researcher did not begin with a theory. Statistical procedures were utilized and a potentially relevant theory emerged.

Data were gathered on 50 undergraduate and graduate students. The researcher utilized a number of inventory assessment tools for the research. The instruments used were the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, the I-Speak Your Language Survey, and the Kolb's Learning Style Inventory.

Data of the temperament types in the non-traditional learning environments indicated that 60% of the students were extroverts. Of those extroverts, 44% had ESTJ temperament types. The online learning environments showed that 56% of the students were introverts. Of those introverts, 86% was perceivers. Twenty-four percent of the online students had INFP temperament types.

The communication styles data in the non-traditional learning environments indicated that 32% of the students were thinkers and 32% were feelers. However, only 8% of the online students were thinkers, but 44% were feelers.

The most dominant learning style in the non-traditional learning environment was the accommodator style. Whereas, the most dominate learning style in the online learning environment was the diverger style.

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Educational Planning: Going Online

Presenters will focus on their experience with and learning from the adaptation of individualized degree program planning from a print-based one-on-one independent study to a web-based format.

Empire State College, founded in 1971, pioneered the individualized approach to degree completion for the nontraditional adult learner. Given the individualized nature of the program, students of necessity need a high degree of self-direction. At the core of this self-direction is Educational Planning, a course generally undertaken at the beginning of a student's enrollment. Educational Planning is a labor intensive, highly collaborative activity between student and mentor. Its outcome is a degree program focused on each student's learning goals, incorporating previous learning from various sources, research on current curriculum requirements and professional expectations in a career field.

Educational Planning has been essentially a solitary activity, accomplished through independent study and one-on-one meetings between student and mentor. It could be an even more solitary activity for students in the Center for Distance Learning, whose geographic disparity meant that their contact with mentors occurred via telephone, mail and, more recently, e-mail.

In Spring, 2000, the Center for Distance Learning adapted the Educational Planning course for delivery on the WWW. Certain expectations motivated the developers. In this asynchronous environment, the influence of peers would enrich the degree planning process by providing a community of learners and a variety of viewpoints. Students would participate in on-line discussion of common readings, sample degree programs and drafts of their programs-in-progress. Mentors would facilitate the discussion and the preparation of documents for assessment.

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Do Faculty Gear the Language of Distance Education Web Courses to Adult Learners? Specialty Books Award for Research Proposal, 1999

Adult educators have suggested ways to teach different age levels simultaneously: adult learners might take only those parts of distance education courses that they need, or courses could have separate appendices. Analysis of distance education web courses should consider learner-centeredness and adapting courses to a target audience; critiques of lecture and classroom methods; critiques of linear course design strategies; and readability. Further, studies of the intertwining of oral and written language reveal that audience involvement is very important in conversation, minimal in lectures, high in letters, and lacking in academic writing, all suggesting that instructors relying on academic writing will probably achieve minimal involvement. Identifying several types of web courses and the accompanying theories, research questions were applied to web courses and faculty interviews. Issues include differences between written and oral strategies implicit in teaching, and between print and web deliveries; and the use of educational philosophies and/or instructional design. Interviews reveal minimal experience in both print and online realms, and little difference in language beyond stressing netiquette, using industrial jargon with working adult learners, and embracing active learning or social constructivism. Suggestions are made for further study.

AHEA 20th Annual Alliance/ACE Conference

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Retention in Accelerated Degree-Completion Programs

This paper looks at data from Indiana Wesleyan University's Adult and Professional Studies Program in light of Tinto's and Boshier's models of retention. Questionnaires from 186 withdrawing students are compared to 155 entering students and 177 graduates. The data indicate that students who are more closely connected to the university are less likely to withdraw. These close connections appear to be related to high motivations upon entry, successful study group experiences, and increased time in the program. Implications for adult accelerated degree programs are discussed. Some retention strategies that are being implemented at Indiana Wesleyan include the development of enduring and cohesive study groups, increased access to an advisor, and supportive intervention at critical times in a student's program.

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A Study of Adult Learners' Persistence and Success in Accelerated and Traditional Programs

This presentation reports the findings from a longitudinal study being collaboratively conducted by a private college with accelerated programs for working adults and a public university with traditional programs for working adults. The major purpose of this research is to identify the individual factors that contribute to or detract from adult learners' success and persistence in college programs. In addition the study identifies those factors associated with persistence and success that may differ according to program format: accelerated (5-week courses) as compared to traditional (16-week courses). Persistence is defined as continuing involvement in coursework or graduation, and success is defined in terms of GPA and/or proportion of credits attempted and passed. There are two parts to this study. Part 1 is an historical analysis and Part 2 is a current analysis. The study, supported by a grant from the USA Group Foundation, started in September, 1999 and will continue through Spring, 2004. This presentation focuses on the completed historical analysis. Initial findings indicate working adults are more successful and persist longer in accelerated programs.

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The Adult Higher Eduction Alliance and the American Council Education presents:

Access to Quality and Success: Applying Principles of Good Practice

October 4-7 2000
The Congress Plaza Hotel & Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois

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CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

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School for New Learning

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Table of Contents

The Classroom as a Model of Social Justice 1
Dr. Keith B. Armstrong and Dr. Susan A. Timm

Adult Students with Learning Disorders and
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders 10
Richard Ashbrook, Jody Fournier, Janette McDonald and Tanya Poteet

A Case Study: Building an Empire By Walking The
Dog—Revitalizing An Adult Program 11
Lee Bash and Margie Martyn

Teaching for Wisdom: Is It Possible? 28
Dr. Caroline Bassett

Thorny Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Fairness
When Evaluating Portfolio Assessment 34
Nancy J. Cooledge, Ph.D, Jocelyn J. Cooledge, M.S., and Kimberly Weihe, M.B.A.

Using Portfolio Assessment for General Education
in an Adult Degree Program 44
Sharon Bailey Drury, MS and Cynthia Benn Tweedell, Ph.D.

A Partnership in Health Professions Education:
Connections between the United States and Israel 54
Charles W. Ford, Ph. D. and Lucia F. Miree, Ph. D., MPH

Quality Learning and Adult Transformative Development 63
Roxanne M. Gonzales and Jayne Pelletier

Transferability of Curriculum Learning Outcomes
from an Adult Baccalaureate Degree Completion
Program by Alumni Leaders to their Workplace Setting 71
Breck A. Harris Ed.D.

Using Comprehensive Portfolios to Encourage
Self-Managed Learning and Assess Program Outcomes 82
Roberta Hartmann, M.S.Ed. and Andrew Carlson, Ph.D.

Adults With Learning Disabilities: A Developmental Perspective 91
Sandra Johnson M.Ed., M.A., CASAC

In Search of Excellence: Informal Observations of
Adult Accounting Students' Perceptions of Quality and Assessment 101
Elene P. Kent, Ph.D.

Assessing for Metacognition Competencies in an
Adult Degree Completion Program 108
Roberta Albom Liebler, Ph.D.

Outcomes and Quality: Assessment is the Key to Success 117
Jane A. Long, MS

Transformational Education Through the Convergence
of Creativity, Compassion, Courage and Community 120
Catherine Marsh

You've Come a Long Way Baby: The Roots and
Renaissance of Cohort-Based Accelerated Learning 130
Craig A. Mealman

Table of Contents

A Research Study to Discover Temperament Types, Communication Styles, and Learning Styles of Adult Learners in Non-traditional and Online Learning Environments.....141
Jean S. Moeller, M.Ad.Ed.

Educational Planning: Going Online.....146
Mary Ellen Shaughnessy, Oto Jones, Susan Oaks and Karen Pass

Do Faculty Gear the Language of Distance Education Web Courses to Adult Learners? Specialty Books Award for Research Proposal, 1999.....153
Evan S. Smith, Ph.D.

Retention in Accelerated Degree-Completion Programs.....163
Cynthia Benn Tweedell, Ph.D.

A Study of Adult Learners' Persistence and Success in Accelerated and Traditional Programs.....172
Raymond J. Wlodkowski

THE CLASSROOM AS A MODEL OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Grounding

Recently, we found ourselves working in a teacher preparation program helping soon-to-be teachers sort out their personal philosophies of learning and teaching. As they wrote about life-problems they had solved, they and we came to see that the word "oppression" seemed to fit as a universal descriptor of what we were discussing. As researchers, we realized, in retrospect, that most of our adult lives have focused on helping people locate, name, and understand their various oppressions; in the process, we addressed our own along the way.

Therefore, this research project brought together the facilitators (us) and the participants (students) for an investigation on oppression, noting both their personal oppressions and those experienced by people close to their lives. What became evident was that oppression is a phenomenon existing on personal, institutional, and national levels.

Participatory research was the basis of this phenomenological investigation, although the approach was modified in two distinct ways: (1) Although individual participants sought to understand their personal oppressions, their oppressions were summarized and presented in a format that allows readers to appreciate the depth and significance of the various oppressions; and (2) members in the participatory research project did not participate in the assessments of what their oppressions meant, nor did they, in its entirety, identify the problems inherent in oppression.

For these reasons, this research project has an ethnographic infrastructure on which the participants' findings on oppression are hung. The cultural components are viewed within individual life-experiences that have limited, reinforced, and perpetuated oppression. In this way, as Freire's work demonstrates, participants identify ways that they participate in the making of culture, in an effort to change the nature and the force of oppression for themselves and those with whom they come into contact.

Additionally, nowhere in this study do the researchers attempt to demonstrate the superiority of one culture over another. No one culture is the ideal to which all others are compared. However, the working assumption of this ethnographic approach is that oppressions do not positively contribute to a just, egalitarian society.

Introduction to the Study

Teacher education curricula incorporate the topics of anti-discrimination and anti-oppression into their programs. While these topics are presented by experts (instructors), the students in the programs often do not critically come to their own conclusions about the significance of discrimination or oppression. The fact that schools often lay greater emphasis on behavioral change than on a change of consciousness worsens the situation. In an attempt to investigate this possible

oversight, an on-going participatory education project was launched, using a critical (or a consciousness-raising) approach.

Adult education often uses the principles of participatory research to engage group participants in discovering critical dimensions of oppression. The assumption is that, by understanding their own experiences with oppression and by sharing those experiences with their research group, they desire to change the way oppression has subtly transferred from their lives to the lives of the students whom they will later teach.

Based in part on Sharon Merriam and Edwin Simpson's (1984, p. 108) notion that participatory research "is the political empowerment of people through group participation in the search for and acquisition of knowledge" (p. 108), an assumption was made that students would be empowered by gaining knowledge about oppression that they had experienced and worked through.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this study: (1) What are the various forms of social inequality; and (2) were participants enabled to propose ways to curb exploitation of those with less political and economic power?

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to empower adult learners through their own "group participation in the search for and acquisition of knowledge" (Merriam and Simpson, 1984, p. 108). Further, the researchers, based in part on personal experiences with oppressive attitudes held by students in curriculum education programs, felt that traditional, hierarchical education courses (designed to discourage oppression) have not succeeded. However, when students have a vested personal connection with their education, they internalize the knowledge.

Contextual Limitations of the Site

The researchers believe that people could connect their own pain and misery with that of others if the threads that connect themselves and others were delineated. Logically, students would have difficulty critically examining the institution that orchestrated the course they were taking as partial fulfillment for that same institution's credential. Yet, as Merriam and Simpson point out, all institutions are worthy of critical examination: "The [participatory] method focuses upon the subtle and overt psychological and social dimensions of oppression . . . The method challenges the way knowledge is produced and disseminated through traditional channels of social institutions and attempts to bring knowledge back to people" (1984, p. 109).

Significance of the Study

The intent of this study is two-fold in relation to discussion of both external and internal oppression. First, we believe that support of oppression is often the result of disconnected empathy for people or is due to ignorance. Closed belief systems disallow the option to care about and feel the suffering of people (or groups of people) we do not know or whom we have been taught to fear. Therefore, a project that fuses the name of the pain (of the different forms of oppression) with the face (of other participants) gives the adult participants reason to loosen their grip on oppression.

Second, and the more difficult hope of this project, these researchers believed that we cannot free ourselves from oppressing others if we continue to be oppressed ourselves. Because overt and covert anger is associated with our personal experiences with oppression, these researchers believe that we cannot give what we do not have. If we do not have a liberating sense of self, understanding the critical forces that reinforce oppression is difficult; and we can not harness those liberating forces to help others. As people loosen their grip on the oppressive forces from their own abused pasts, they might become more generous, giving support to the liberation of others.

If internal and/or external oppression were to be affected by this participatory project, the project would have to be authentic enough for the participants to let it through their defenses. Thus, the project had to be about and promoted by them, and genuinely in their best interest. This notion is supported by Seidman (1989, p. 7): Social inquiry of this nature "can succeed only if individuals are able to recognize their own lives in the descriptions provided by the theory".

Adult education's use of the participatory method has made visible the oppression of many societal groups: women, ethnic groups, gays and lesbians, the elderly, the physically challenged, the poor, and those mentally, emotionally, and sexually oppressed. Critical thinkers within adult education have been sensitive to these emergent groups and, in many cases, instrumental in helping them to clarify their claims within the United States democracy.

Review of Related Literature

This review of literature has six parts: Critical Adult Education on Oppression, School as a Site for the Participatory Method, Language of Dominance, the Oppressed at War, Critique of Contemporary Education and the Role of the Teacher, and Democracy and Individual Freedom within Democracy. For the purposes of this paper, the more important parts of the literature review are Critical Adult Education on Oppression and Critique of Contemporary Education and the Role of the Teacher.

Critical Adult Education on Oppression. Oppression is the cruel use of power to stifle or impede a person's needs or wishes. Yet, oppression "is a product of its own history" (Graff, 1987, p. 7). Oppression has existed so long in both the oppressed and the oppressor that its origins are lost. Therefore, this study attempts to make no such claims.

If students are to learn to transform oppression, the process will have to be personally meaningful to them. Participatory methods must be sensitive to the learner's multiple subjectivities (Weiler, 1988). Critical thinking first asks the participants to care about the issues that they are trying to understand, issues that are an extension of an experience rooted in the community. In this sense, critical thinking is more than merely a systematic unraveling of a problem, but a concern joined with the desire to liberate the person from the pain of oppression.

At times, members of this project felt fatalistic because the end result was that the body of oppressed people became the possession of the oppressor. Fortunately, the participants in this project offered each other support, reinforcing their ability not to become possessions.

Critique of Contemporary Education and the Role of the Teacher. Within U.S. democracy, space exists for two ideological positions: One states that America should

look a certain way and be ruled by certain people, the other suggests that differing views are allowed and that people should not be harassed because of them. This second view of democracy is what we study in school, but this research project draws that notion into question.

This project was organized in Lindeman's sense of democracy. All participants had equal political power: Their voices were respected and their fears were treated as accurate representations of a life world that they had experiences. In this respect, Lindeman adroitly captures the state of consciousness that our project became: "The qualities which comprised the democratic mind were tolerance, vigour, imagination, sympathy, respect, humour, self-deprecation, reflectivity, passion and skepticism" (as cited in Brookfield, 1987, preface).

This participatory project is an exercise in democracy, a model for both learning and for facilitating. Together, respectfully, participants attempted ways to change their relationships with oppression. To attempt this change within our participatory project, we realized the need to stop oppressing and violating others with different views.

Methodological Overview

This research project was initially begun in educational foundation classes but since has been extended to diversity courses as well. In each of these settings, the research is facilitated by adult educators. The educator's tasks were to explain the nature of the non-hierarchical role of the facilitator and to open the dialogue on the nature of oppression and how each member in the group is a part of group-think on oppression. In addition, the facilitators assessed ethnographically the results of the presented oppressions for the sake of this study.

Similar to Freire's research with photographs, each participant used a book containing 85 photographs showing various conditions of life (Armstrong, 1996). Participants chose four photographs about which they wrote four autobiographical essays during the course of a semester. Each of the four autobiographical essays contained an experience and a potential resolution to an oppressive or discriminatory situation. The learners then decided to read or give a gist of their essays to the group. After participants presented their essays, group members asked questions for further clarification. At this point, participants interacted with each other to discern critically the meaning of the presented discrimination or oppression, as well as to determine personal implications of the oppression.

The methodology used in this study is an analysis of critical thinking on the part of the researchers and the participants, and how all could meet the five features that often distinguish participatory research:

> (1) A subjective commitment on the part of the researcher to the people under study; (2) close involvement of the researcher with the research community; (3) a problem-centered approach that utilizes data gathering, from which action may be taken; (4) an educational process for both the researchers and people for whom the research is conducted; and (5) respect for the capability and potential of people to produce knowledge and analyze it. (Merriam & Simpson, 1984, p. 111)

To demonstrate the above five features, the participatory project's four integral components will be critically analyzed: (1) Researcher Giving Space to the Participatory Method, (2) Interaction of Research and Participant in Mutual Space, (3) Autobiographical Writing as Problem-Centered Data, and (4) Photography as a Trigger for Creative Consciousness Raising.

Researcher Giving Space. Critical thinking draws heavily from the experiences of the learners, allowing them to speak of oppression as a means to understanding it. To achieve these ends, the learners recognize their weaknesses and their strengths in response to oppression, to move toward liberation and freedom. Critical feminist thought supports this notion: "Feminist consciousness is both consciousness of weakness and consciousness of strength" (Bartky, 1990, p. 16). Yet, a movement toward one's own freedom must not be obstructed by the researcher. Critical approaches warn that the educator must stand back from the freeing process if the learner is to experience freedom.

Although the process is simple in nature, Shor explains the need to keep the process student-centered: "Critical education should be participatory . . . [students] hear their own thoughts and receive cues about my serious interest in their words . . . this invites them to participate" (1988, p. 105). Similar to Shor's notions, adult educators Malcolm Knowles, Myles Horton, and Eduard Lindeman say that the adult learner's unhealthy reliance on experts makes the adult educator's job difficult: "It becomes a difficult task to get the adult learner[s] to recognize their own resources for their own problem solving" (cited in Brookfield, 1995, p. 123).

Friere says that adult learners raise their consciousness through participatory methods, as that process develops in them an understanding of how people think and what people think (as cited in Collins, 1977). Central to Freire's argument is that when people listen to other's opinions, they experience the "transforming action upon each other" (Hickling-Hudson, 1988, p. 23). In the same vein, this project on oppression was transformative.

Interaction of Researchers and Participants in Mutual Space. From the text, *Paulo Freire on Higher Education*, the university environment is thought to be practically suited for dialogue about oppression, for it is at the university where critical thinking, like feminist and Freirian discourses, can more freely be discussed (as cited in Escobar, Fernandez, & Guevara-Niebla, 1994). Both feminist and Freirian approaches knowingly accept variance of opinion.

If the university environment offers learners a place where they may voice their experiences and learn from each other's oppressions, that climate has begun to take on attributes of consciousness raising and creative learning□creative in the sense that the learner discovers ways to suspend personal prejudice while others voice their experiences, and they learn creative ways of looking at their own experiences with oppression.

Creative, Autobiographical Writing as Problem-Centered Data. Students were asked to write autobiographical essays that would be seen as works of art, read to the class as art, respected as art, and critiqued as art□that is, valued as personal expression.

Creative force is central to the methodology of this study, both because it produces the data of the research project and because it demonstrated the significance

of creativity in the participatory method. Further, the project's creative force gave learners the freedom to express themselves without cultural invasion and to enjoy the act of sharing.

Along with Freire, critical feminists cite reasons for the writing component of this project: "Freewriting from our experiences . . . helps people to remember and express times they experienced oppression because of their sex and gender" (MacKenzie, 1993, p. 126). Writing one's experiences brings forth forgotten oppressions and presents them in a way that the writer can feel their creative ownership.

The sharing of oppression through autobiography gave this participatory project a creative power to break through old mind sets; this point was also made in Berman's (1994) writings: By writing autobiographically on oppression and sharing their autobiographical writing with each other, "[t]hey [students] reached important breakthroughs in their lives" (p. 3). These breakthroughs are additional examples of individual artistic expression.

Photography as a Trigger for Creative Consciousness Raising. A required text, containing photographs, was perused by the adult learners before they wrote their autobiographical essays. This method was used to act as a stimulus or a way of recalling past situations where oppression was present. There were photographs suggestive of troubled childhood, youth, adulthood, gender issues, sexual orientation conditions, gender questions, physical, mental and emotional factors, and socioeconomic states. The participants based their essays on memories that the photograph helped them to recall.

Historically, the methodological incorporation of photographs has been a useful, educational tool for consciousness raising. Freire also used everyday scenes in pictures to ready participants to creatively write about oppression (cited in Shor, 1988). Writing about oppression is traditionally done after looking at photographs because "words are triggered by people looking at photographs" (Chambers, 1981, p. 13). Anthropologists who use photography as a research method assert that the informant's response, after looking at the photograph, is not a response to the photographer but to "their own reflected images, a dialogue with themselves" (Collier & Collier, 1986, p,. 118). Additionally, "photographs are charged with unexpected emotional material that triggers intense feelings and divulges truth" (Collier & Collier, p. 131).

Findings

Two major kinds of data were collected and ethnographically presented for this study: (1) the types of oppressions found in the participants' autobiographical essays, and (2) the methods for resolution of oppression as written by participants in their autobiographical writings. Of the 500 essays that have been collected to date, for the purposes of this paper, we will discuss the first three racial oppressions as they were catalogued in our data.

Racial oppression existed when the participants indicated that a person's race was an integral factor in his or her experience with oppression. Racial oppression does not exist independent of mental oppression and, in some cases, physical oppression. What separates this section is the focus the participant chose to take: Race in and of itself is seen as the prime catalyst for social reaction and/or interaction.

White Women and Minorities. Although our research has often focused more on the person of color's view in multicultural interactions, we have simply selected the first three essays as they were entered into the database. Indeed, this is a tender area for all racial groups. Still, the three autobiographies, all by white women, make candid observations of their personal experiences with this issue. Each of these participants sees the minority person as a close friend or companion and is surprised that people outside their friendship cannot accept this truth.

One white female wrote that she has a wonderful friendship with a black male. However, she sees in her black friend a reaction to the hatred he sees in those who observe him while he is with her. She wrote: "Although I am obviously not a candidate for a beauty contest, I had never been told by someone that he/she did not want to be seen in public with me. . . . Kishan, my friend, had simply meant that he felt uncomfortable with me in public situations because he is a black male and I am a white female." The truth of life in democratic America incenses her, and she makes her demands known: "We have every right to be friends□and to go out in public without being harassed." Although this respondent does not identify the source of harassment, the next participant does.

In this essay, the white female identifies that the source of the racial harassment comes from another Latino male who feels she is an "ugly white trash slut that wants to kill out the pure Hispanic race." Not understanding the milieu and social context from which the angry Latino is coming, she responds by saying her friend "wasn't 100% Hispanic so he was actually wasting his breath." Undoubtedly, she was surprised when the angry Latino began beating up her friend, but she got the point: De jure segregation can be self-inforced by various racial groups in the United States.

The methods used for defining turf varies by racial and ethnic group. From her close interactions with blacks and whites, a participant distinguished the differences. First, she presents her credentials: "I made a point of making friends with the few blacks in my neighborhood. When I was older, I dated a few black men. I always felt a sense of satisfaction that I did not become as narrow-minded as those around me." Second, she identifies the primary character difference between blacks and whites: "Whenever I was with a group of black friends, I regularly stood in awe of the sense of unity radiating among them. I find that groups of white people tend to form well-guarded cliques. . . . I longed to be a part of a community so in touch with who they were."

The third participant used for this paper wrote of racism:

> "As a woman of African descent, I view several struggles emanating and touching very close to home. . . . I struggle with the pain of loss for mothers whose children are killed by street violence. I struggle with the knowledge that many children will never realize the American Dream, but will be the victims of its nightmares." She concludes with the notion that struggle and those who struggle are a bridge: "I struggle but bear witness and I am strengthened to continue the struggle as those before me. I am the daughter of an ancient mother of civilization. My bridge has been built by the likes of Rosa, Malcolm, Senegbe, Muhammad, Jesus, Ghandi,

Angela, Morrison, Sojouner, Garvy, W.E.B. DuBois. . . . My memory is long."

Conclusion

This participatory study demonstrated that individuals can come together to identify and specify their personal facts about oppression. These individuals do not need to rely on experts. In fact, for them to rely on experts would seemingly interrupt their ability to gain transformatively personal strength by identifying and working through the emotional and intellectual meaning of oppression.

Each researcher will discover unique results and will find that each group provides unique insights of the topic at hand due to the changing nature of the participant base. This fact is one of the compelling reasons for using this approach.

Participatory projects, in conjunction with adult education facilitation, can assist people in critically coming to their own conclusions about the significance of discrimination and oppression. This amalgam offers liberatory hope for both personal and societal transformation toward a more democratic and egalitarian society whose members are repositories of its freedom.

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ADULT STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISORDERS AND ATTENTION-DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDERS

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Introduction

Adult students, compared to their traditional counterparts, may be more likely to have a higher incidence of Learning Disorders (LD) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD). Indeed, higher education's failure to identify and serve disabled students may be a primary reason that many adult learners never completed their undergraduate studies, instead opting for the work world where natural, compensatory strategies permitted effective and successful careers by placing a premium on broad performance outcomes. Since the adoption of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), educational institutions have been specifically prohibited against discriminating against individuals with disabilities. Surprisingly, relatively few adult degree programs have become pioneers in teaching adult learners with disabilities despite the apparent goodness-of-fit between alternative delivery formats and the special needs of students with disabilities.

The paper will consider three aspects of working with adult students with LD and ADHD. (1) Higher education's obligations under the ADA will be discussed, including the provision for nonstandard testing conditions. The ADA's term "qualified individual with a disability" and the "essential requirements" clause will be discussed. (2) Participants will be introduced to the defining characteristics of LD and ADHD so that they are better able to detect and refer students with disabilities. (3) Adult learning theory will be mentioned that establishes a pedagogical foundation compatible with serving the needs of students with LD and ADHD.

Just as adult development models have led to the empowerment of adult learners, we invite our readers to wonder why our non-traditional, alternative delivery programs have not consciously extended the reach of practice to "disabled" populations. By challenging higher education's epistemological and pedagogical assumptions about the learning disabled, we might again exert our change-agent role, and in partnership with our students, our "disabled" students, stretch our collective agency toward transforming assumptions about higher education and the individuals it serves.

We begin the paper with a summary of current practices, but in the end we realize these practices are unsatisfactory. Contemporary constructions of disability risk maintaining the status quo by preserving the power imbalances and casting diverse voices to the margins of discussions about educational reform. Still, we believe there is value in knowing current practice; antidiscrimination legislation, such as the ADA, is one tool at our disposal that can be used to open a broader debate about serving a diverse

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community of adult learners. As a first step toward this goal, we invite participants to review their own institutions' missions, policies and procedures with respect to disabled students and propose the groundwork for a study on the best practices of teaching adult learners with disabilities.

Higher Education's Obligations Under the Law

While our attention mainly will be directed toward a discussion of higher education's obligations under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), protection of the disabled student originates in two types of federal legislation – **federal grant legislation**, such as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 [PL 94-142] and its reenactment, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 [IDEA], and **antidiscrimination legislation**, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A detailed discussion of the differences between these types of legislation is beyond the scope of this short paper, though interested readers might begin their study of this topic with a paper by Roberts & Mather (1995) that reviews the interpretation of these laws with an emphasis on their differences, and a chapter by Gregg, Johnson & McKinley (1996) that specifically addresses the impact of this legislation on adult learners. In short, postsecondary educational institutions cannot: (1) limit the number of students with disabilities they admit, (2) make preadmission inquiries about whether or not a student has a disability, (3) use admissions tests or other selection criteria that do not make provisions for individuals with disabilities, (4) exclude qualified students with disabilities from any course of study, (5) limit eligibility for scholarships, financial aid, fellowships, internships, or assistantships on the basis of disability, or (6) use methods of evaluation that adversely affect persons with disabilities Smith & Strick, 1997).

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits the discrimination of individuals with disabilities; it specifically forbids licensing, certification and testing authorities from discriminating against applicants with disabilities. The ADA (ADA, 1992) defines disability as: (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individuals; (b) a record of such impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment. **Physical impairment** is defined as "any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organ, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine." **Mental impairment** is defined as "any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities."

An individual with a disability does not automatically qualify for an accommodation. An individual must demonstrate that he or she is a "qualified individual with a disability" under ADA's Title II. An individual is "qualified" if, "with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers or the provision of auxiliary aids and services" he or she can meet the "essential requirements" of the testing or licensing requirements.

The ADA, its associated regulations and the thrust of legal opinion have yielded certain specifications and exclusions (Adams, 1991; Gordon & Keiser, 1998; Piltch, Datz & Valles, 1993; Thurlow, Elliott, Erickson & Ysseldyke, 1997; Zuckerman, 1993). For example, current drug users are not protected as individuals with disabilities, but former drug

users and individuals undergoing rehabilitation are protected as long as they are not currently using illegal drugs. Conditions that are not considered impairments include environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages (e.g., poverty, lack of education, prison record). Personality traits (e.g., poor judgement, quick temper) are not by themselves impairments but may be if they are symptoms of a physical or mental disorder. In no case is a change to an essential job or program requirement required, and in rare cases an individual's disability may be a basis to preclude their entry into a profession. If "reasonable modifications" would not permit the applicant to perform the "essential requirements," then an individual would not be protected under the ADA. Finally, accommodations and auxiliary aids that create an undue burden on an organization or service provider are not required.

An individual is protected under ADA only if he or she is disabled relative to the general population, though interpretation of this provision has been subject to considerable debate and judicial opinion. To quote EEOC language, "An individual is not substantially limited in a major life activity if the limitation does not amount to a significant restriction when compared with the abilities of the average person." Establishing the general population as the norm against which to judge impairment has profound implications for determinations of disabilities. Normal functioning in an individual, even though it may be discrepant from the same individual's superior abilities on other tasks, does not usually warrant an accommodation.

An individual requesting special accommodations has the burden to establish the presence of a qualifying disability under the ADA. Any expense related to the documentation of the disability is the responsibility of the individual. The process of qualifying an individual as disabled under ADA requires current, detailed and professional documentation; simply supplying a diagnostic label is insufficient. Specific functional limitations must be described and effective accommodations recommended.

The "reasonable accommodation" or nonstandard testing condition must be linked to an individual's functional limitation. The ADA vaguely outlines examples of testing accommodations: "required modifications to an examination may include changes in the length of time permitted for completion of the examination and adaptation of the manner in which the examination is given...Auxiliary aids and services required by this section may include taped examinations, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments, Braille or large print examination and answer sheets or qualified readers for individuals with visual impairments or learning disabilities." Tests must reflect the skills and aptitudes of an individual rather than impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless those are job-related and "essential." The idea is to ensure that the tests accurately reflect an individual's skills and aptitudes rather than the individual's impaired skills. Therefore, the aim of a reasonable modification is to remove the elements of impairment without affecting valid assessment of the essential skills.

Physical Disabilities and the American with Disabilities Act

Physical disabilities, while only tangentially related to this paper, are of course covered under the ADA. Suffice to say here that there are guidelines for the documentation of physical disabilities (A.S.A.I., 1992; Damari, 1998). It is fairly easy to establish the diagnosis of a physical disorder by following certain standards of practice, but it is not so clear what accommodation is warranted by a particular diagnosis. General guidelines call

for an evaluation by a health provider qualified in the diagnosis and treatment of the particular disability, a diagnosis based on accepted standards of practice, confirmatory studies where appropriate (e.g., laboratory or neuroimaging results), functional assessment that relates the degree and type of impairment to the testing conditions, and discussion of the amelioration of the impairment by certain nonstandard testing conditions (Wainapel, 1998).

Mental Disorder and the American with Disabilities Act

The American with Disabilities Act subsumes psychiatric illness. Technically, learning disorders and ADHD are "mental disorders" since these labels are maintained in the repository of psychiatric nomenclature – Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) (A.P.A., 1994). Other "mental disorders" also are covered, like depression and anxiety, even schizophrenia. Generally, the requirements for justifying accommodations related to a mental disorder disability are identical to the requirements for other types of mental and physical impairments (Wylonis & Schweizer, 1998).

Defining Characteristics of Learning Disorders and ADHD
General Information on Learning Disorders

Four types of Learning Disorders are recognized by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) (A.P.A., 1994): (1) Reading Disorder (315.00), (2) Mathematics Disorder (315.1), (3) Disorder of Written Expression (315.2) and (4) Learning Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (315.9). According to DSM-IV:

> Learning Disorders are diagnosed when the individual's achievement on individually administered, standardized tests in reading, mathematics, or written expression is substantially below that expected for age, schooling, and level of intelligence. The learning problems significantly interfere with academic achievement or activities of daily living that require reading, mathematical, or writing skills. A variety of statistical approaches can be used to establish that a discrepancy is significant. *Substantially below* [italics in original] is usually defined as a discrepancy of more than two standard deviations between achievement and IQ. A smaller discrepancy between achievement and IQ (i.e., between one and two standard deviations) is sometimes used, especially in cases where an individual's performance on an IQ test may have been compromised by an associated disorder in cognitive processing, a comorbid mental disorder or general medical condition, or the individual's ethnic or cultural background. If a sensory deficit is present, the learning difficulties must be in excess of those usually associated with the deficit...Individualized testing is always required to make the diagnosis of a Learning Disorder...Learning Disorders must be differentiated from **normal variations in academic attainment** [boldface in original] and from scholastic difficulties due to **lack of opportunity, poor teaching,** or **cultural factors** (pp. 46-47).

Learning Disorders were formerly known as Academic Skill Disorders and often are referred to as learning disabilities among educators. The term learning disability is

not quite synonymous with Learning Disorder insofar as the authoritative source for the definition of a Learning Disorder is the DSM-IV, whereas certain federal laws have set forth definitions of learning disability.

The term learning disability sometimes encompasses two related diagnostic categories from the DSM-IV: (1) Motor Skills Disorder (Developmental Coordination Disorder), and (2) Communication Disorders (Expressive Language Disorder, Mixed Receptive-Expressive Language Disorder, Phonological Disorder, and Stuttering). Inclusion of these diagnoses among the general class of Alearning disabilities is dependent on the source of the learning disability definition. In the strict sense, these diagnoses are not Learning Disorders, but the syndromes are types of mental impairments, and as such, these diagnoses are a legitimate basis for requesting accommodations under the ADA.

Guidelines for the Documentation of a Learning Disorder

Guidelines for the documentation of a Learning Disorder have been established by The Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD, 1998). These guidelines are organized into four general areas: (1) qualifications of the evaluator, (2) recency of documentation, (3) appropriate clinical documentation, and (4) evidence to establish a rationale for accommodations. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate learning disabilities provided they have the relevant training and experience: clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, learning disabilities specialists, and medical doctors. Documentation should be based on a diagnostic interview, a psychological assessment consisting of relevant measures of aptitude (intellectual assessment), academic achievement, and information processing (e.g., memory, perception, and executive functioning). A specific diagnosis must be provided and alternative explanations for learning problems should be ruled out. Standard scores scores should be provided for all normed measures. The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

The diagnosis Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) refers to a behavioral syndrome, which previously has been known as attention-deficit disorder, minimal brain dysfunction, or hyperkinesis. Three subtypes of ADHD are delineated: predominantly inattentive (314.00), predominantly hyperactive-impulsive (314.01), and a combined type (314.01). Assessment of ADHD usually includes a detailed symptom review, a fairly comprehensive life history and administration of a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale specific to the detection of ADHD. According DSM-IV:

> The essential feature of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development. Some hyperactive-impulsive or inattentive symptoms that cause impairment must have been present before age seven years, although many individuals are diagnosed after the symptoms have been present for a number of years. Some

> impairment from the symptoms must be present in at least two settings (e.g., at home and at school or work). There must be clear evidence of interference with developmentally appropriate social, academic, or occupational functioning...Inattention may be manifest in academic, occupational, or social situations. Individuals with this disorder may fail to give close attention to details or may make careless mistakes in schoolwork or other tasks. Work is often messy and performed carelessly and without considered thought. Individuals often have difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities and find it hard to persist with tasks until completion. They often appear as if their mind is elsewhere or as if they are not listening or did not hear what has just been said. There may be frequent shifts from one activity to another...Failure to complete tasks should be considered in making this diagnosis only if it is due to inattention as opposed to other possible reasons (e.g., a failure to understand instructions). These individuals often have difficulties organizing tasks and activities. Tasks that require sustained mental effort are experienced as unpleasant and markedly aversive...Individuals with this disorder are easily distracted by irrelevant stimuli and frequently interrupt ongoing tasks to attend to trivial noises or events that are usually and easily ignored by others (pp. 78-79).

Guidelines for the Documentation of ADHD

Documentation guidelines for nonstandard testing conditions involving ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) identify four important areas (Consortium on ADHD Documentation, 1998): (1) qualifications of the evaluator, (2) recency of documentation, (3) comprehensiveness of the documentation to substantiate the ADHD, and (4) evidence to establish a rationale to support the need for accommodations. According to the guidelines:

> Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of ADHD must have training in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders...The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADHD provided they have comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of ADHD and direct experience with an adolescent or adult ADHD population: clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors (pp. 223-234).

According to the guidelines, in most cases a diagnostic evaluation should have been completed within the last three years. In addition, the documentation should be comprehensive and include the following components: 1) evidence of early impairment, 2) evidence of current impairment, 3) rule out of alternative diagnoses or explanations, 4) relevant testing, 5) identification of DSM-IV criteria, 6) a specific diagnosis, and 7) an interpretative summary. The DSM-IV recommends administration of a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale specific to the detection of ADHD. Each accommodation recommended by the evaluator should include a rationale. Documentation should include any record of prior accommodations or auxiliary aids,

although a prior history, without demonstration of a current need, does not in itself warrant the provision of a like accommodation.

Adult Learners, Learning Theory and Disability

Major theories that have provided a foundation for understanding how and why adult learners come to know, to learn, and to make meaning provide a useful framework for understanding the adult learner who also has a disability. Environmental, instructional, and facilitator/teacher qualities significantly and positively affect the adult learner who has learning disabilities (Lord, 2000; Haddad, 1995), though one must realize that there has been relatively little written on adult learners with disabilities (Hanlon & Cantrell, 1999). Gregg and Phillips (1996) observed that concern about adults hardly is a major focus in the field of learning disabilities. While there is no grand theory or theorist that lays claim to a complete model of adult learning, there are several worthy of discussion, especially as applied to adults with learning challenges.

Today's adult learning theories first drew from the fields of humanistic psychology and philosophy, and more recently have been expanded to include other fields such as sociology, critical theory, and feminist pedagogy (Merriam, 1993). In its early development much of the learning emphasis was on mental and cognitive processes. Malcomb Knowles, perhaps most widely known for his concept of andragogy – "the art and science of helping adults learn" – offered five basic assumptions about adult learners: 1) adults are internally motivated to learn and thus are self-directed; 2) adults, because of their previous life experiences possess a learning orientation; 3) adults have a readiness to learn; 4) they have prior life experiences and learnings; and 5) as unique individuals they have an understanding of self (Knowles, 1980; Pratt, 1993).

Andragogy is clearly rooted in democratic ideals and values. Inherent in the concept of andragogy is the belief in the goodness of humankind, the uniqueness of each individual learner, and the ability for all learners to make a meaningful contribution to society. Unlike its counterpart, pedagogy, the art and science of helping children learn, where the traditional emphasis is on teaching and the teacher, andragogy places the emphasis on the learner and learning. While andragogy often is not mentioned in the literature for adults with learning disabilities, its basic underpinnings could well serve those who possess special learning challenges.

Carl Rogers, most commonly known for his client-centered therapy, influenced adult learning through his contributions to the field of experiential learning. He equated experiential learning with personal growth and change and felt that everyone had the innate capability to learn. Rogers also noted that the teacher functioned best as a facilitator who created a positive environment and climate for learning, provided clear purposes for the learner; made different resources available, was able to balance intellectual and emotional components of learning, and was willing to share appropriate thoughts and feelings with the learner. Like andragogy, these tenants have the capacity to benefit the learning disabled adult. Other notable theorists with contributing ideas that have centered on self-directed learning include the early works of Houle (1961), Tough (1971) and Knowles (1975). Self-direction here means one who is independent, self-motivated, and therefore, self-directed (Merriam, 1993).

In a shift from the cognitive aspect of learning, the sociological literature suggests that adult education be viewed in a larger sociocultural context. How, why, when, and

with what processes one learns seem to be influenced as much by the social and cultural context as by one's mental processes. Social class could be said to influence one's economic abilities thereby impacting the choices available for educational opportunities. It would appear that more options and opportunities for learning are more readily available to middle and upper class learners than are available to blue-collar workers. The same could be said for those adults with learning disabilities.

Moreover, depending on the cultural norms and groups, some people may prefer to work collaboratively rather than individually. A sense of rugged individualism, independence, competition, and self-reliance are common, though somewhat mythologized, characteristics of the early American, and such idealized traits have been passed on to many in our current generation. A collaborative, interdependent, collective approach is different and more common to Eastern and Native American cultures.

The German philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, has greatly influenced the field of critical theory that also focuses on the social context of the situation. Specifically, Habermas, much like Freire, is concerned with those people who are oppressed and lack basic opportunities within a given society. Through educational practices and action the oppressed become constructors of their own world and liberate themselves from oppression, thus creating significant social change and transformation. As applied to adult learning, critical theory is concerned with educating the oppressed so that they learn to become empowered and forever change their unfavorable conditions.

Paulo Freire, who did much of his revolutionary work in Brazil, challenged individuals to see their social systems critically ("conscientization"). He is credited with refuting the "banking" notion — the idea that learners are the "places" where "teachers" deposit large sums of information (Freire, 1972). Better learners are those who are capable of receiving the larger deposits and better teachers or those who can make the most and largest deposits. Freire offers an alternative by proposing that the oppressed create a new way of thinking about their situation — to not see it as helpless, but rather as one that can be changed and hence, liberated. In this process, the oppressors are also changed and liberated. With help from teachers and facilitators, Freire's work also has potential for helping those adults with learning disabilities, since in many ways, the disabled are an oppressed group within our society. Freire stresses the need for genuine dialogue and respect among those involved in the process and action plans for change.

Adapted from Habermas' work is Jack Mezirow's research on tranformational learning. Mezirow places emphasis on becoming self aware and self-reflexive. Critical thinking leads to critical reflection which is ultimately intended to create meaning in one's life resulting in transformation (Merriam, 1993; Mezirow, 1991). Specifically, transformative learning as described by Mezirow involves meaning schemes that the learner creates from past experiences, and engagement in rational discourse. Feminist scholarship supplies another perspective, often in the form of a list of concerns that address the specific needs of women, but also addresses the issues of privilege, power, and oppression in other populations. Concerns include (1) how to teach effectively so individuals might positively effect change in their lives, (2) how to emphasize connections and relationships, and (3) how to realize personal empowerment. Like the influences of critical social theory on the works of Freire and Mezirow, feminist theory is intended to be emancipatory (Tisdell, 1993).

Gregg and Phillips (1996) call for participatory action research and training with three central components: (1) maximum involvement of ultimate and intermediate beneficiaries, (2) systematic action to achieve change or applications, and (3) the dynamic interaction of consumers and constituents. Gregg and Ferri (1996), in an especially provocative chapter on the need for radical reforms in the field of learning disabilities, examine the political and educational utility of a radical constructivist frame for adults with learning disorders. On one hand, the attribution of learning disorder to biological-cognitive structures justifies accommodations, but the drawback to such a construction of cause does not challenge the myth of normalcy, and "...ignores other factors that may impede an individual's adaptation to a particular context such as cultural, economic, and personal factors (p. 33)." Sociocultural models, so foreign to firmly rooted conceptions of learning disorder – such as the contextually sterile DSM-IV definitions – argue for recognition of the situational factors and ultimately for socially-contextualized theories of knowledge. "Individuals with learning disabilities are a diverse, multiply situated group, questioning the salience of the very category. More important, 'normal' is presented as a politically charged myth (p. 39)."

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A CASE STUDY:
BUILDING AN EMPIRE BY WALKING THE DOG – REVITALIZING AN ADULT PROGRAM

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Introduction

One of the fastest growing demographic groups among college students are those students who are 25 and older (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). Many reports suggest that most colleges and universities have already begun to encounter some dramatic shifts in the makeup of their student body (Life After 40, 1996). A growing number of college presidents have come to agree with Flint's (2000) observation that "ubiquitous adult learners are at least as deserving of our attention as that given to the stereotyped image of the college student as one who is 18-23 years old in residential, full-time study" (p. 11). Maehl (2000) cites a number of sources to emphasize that more than 50% of the total enrollment in these institutions will be 25 years or older by the year 2005 – especially when diverse learning needs such as certificates, seminars, etc. are considered. Although this will require some level of adjustment on most campuses, adult programs that have been maintaining a status-quo approach may be facing even greater challenges than most. The difficulty for such institutions will be to create a dynamic program that is competitive and appealing, flexible and entrepreneurial, yet rigorous and based on excellence.

In the academy, change often poses special problems. According to Kennedy (2000, May/June), "Our universities do not usually befriend change and innovation; in fact these institutions usually ignore them" (p. 1). But for those institutions who are willing to seek alternative models, this case study examines how one such program was able to address these issues in the midst of its own transformation.

Background

Baldwin-Wallace College (B-W) is a liberal arts college located outside Cleveland, Ohio. It has offered degrees for adult learners since the mid-1940s. In its prime, various related associations recognized B-W for its record of outstanding practices and cited its adult program. Approximately eleven years ago, the adult student enrollment achieved its highest level and since then, has endured a steady decline characterized by approximately 30% fewer students enrolled at the end of the 1999 school year. The adult program was offered through the Evening and Weekend College with approximately 50% of the courses available exclusively to adult students and the remainder shared with traditional day students. In late 1998, after having assessed the viability of the program through an external consultant, the B-W administration decided to strengthen its commitment to the adult learner population by bringing in fresh leadership with a mandate for positive change. It is this scenario that provides the impetus for this paper.

The Empire

Because dialogue about the adult learning programs at B-W had been campus-wide, the expectation for change was high though non-specific. That is, everyone agreed that change needed to take place but there was little consensus about the nature of the change. Nonetheless, there was general agreement that the change would probably have to be dynamic and dramatic in order to reverse the enrollment momentum. The first critical decision was to create a model that exemplified the best practices described in recent literature (Flint, 1999, & Maehl, 2000) while maintaining integrity to the B-W culture – thus, the notion of building a new "empire."

As a blueprint for creating this new empire, the new leadership elected to capitalize on its mandate for change by coupling this mandate with the pursuit of becoming a model program by drawing from the guidelines offered by Tierney (1998):

> Accordingly, we suggest that if academe is to go to the root causes of our problems, we need to rethink and, of consequence, restructure what we do. Change ought not to come from around the edges, but rather go to some of our core activities. We can see that many previous managerial remedies were more concerned with improving systems that already exist than with inventing new ones....Instead of improving a system that exists, we want to challenge old ways of thinking and acting in academe by proffering suggestions about new ways of thinking, and hence acting, in postsecondary institutions (p. 2).

And to follow the advice of Chaffee (1998):

> The most important first step in any substantial initiative for change is to identify, strengthen, and give visibility to what the organization is already doing that fits the desired pattern. Not only does this capitalize on existing investments for a first start, but perhaps equally important, it minimizes the sense that change is impossible or that existing activities are not valued (pp. 30-31).

Furthermore, the very nature of the adult learner can be characterized as more assertive and demanding than their younger traditional classmates. Therefore, in today's market, "If we do not meet student expectations, someone else will" (Chaffee, 1998, p. 24). There are many examples of how this lack of attention to student expectations has taken place in the past. Too often we forget the consumer in the classroom either by scheduling classes at ill-advised times, not providing prompt feedback when a student/client/customer has a problem or complaint, or not becoming actively engaged in satisfying them.

To be able to satisfy the needs of their adult students, the B-W program set about to clearly identify and assess these needs. As Tierney (1998) points out, "We need to know our customers in considerable detail, including who they are, why they are here, their expectations of us, what kind of problems they have, where they turn to when they have problems, and what and how well they are learning" (p. 5).

There are many ways to determine these needs. Some institutions use formal surveys before graduation. The information gathered can prove to be beneficial, but it is

equally important for students to have more frequent and convenient methods to give feedback. People who have first-line access to students can provide helpful information. Administrative people who receive phone calls and hear student requests should be encouraged to compile and pass this information on. Academic advisors have an excellent opportunity to collect data from students. Students who are planning schedules may relay information about professors, scheduling problems, and course requirements. The B-W strategy was to utilize a combination of many of these initiatives.

In addition, the philosophical bases for these empire-building objectives were drawn from the "Creating A Nation of Learners" segment of *An American Imperative* (1993). These initiatives were supported by the primary premise that the needs of the students be given highest priority. Focus groups, analyses of data obtained from various internal sources and publications, and a survey that was distributed to all adult students were utilized in order to gain a clear picture of practices and structure. Once these were examined, the program initiated a strategic plan containing mission statement, vision statement, SWOT analysis, and a list of objectives. This information was compiled as a booklet that was distributed to all members of the faculty and staff at the college.

Campus-wide distribution of materials that identified the mission of the program and its first-year strategic plan was considered essential since identity was determined to be one of the primary problems for the program – that is, there was little agreement or understanding of the role and function of the existing adult learner unit. Additional on-campus outreach efforts were systematically undertaken in order to both increase the dialogue and explain the large number of new initiatives and other dynamic options that were introduced in the first year.

Finally, as numerous dialogues were sustained across campus about the new program, the need for non-curricular initiatives became evident as well if the program expected to succeed and achieve its objectives. Once again drawing upon some of the best practices demonstrated by highly successful enterprises, the newly-named Division of Lifelong Learning at B-W made a commitment to achieving world-class service since "How customers are treated is often the difference between organizations that succeed and those that fail. Courtesy, and the behaviors involved in it are integral to achieving world-class recognition and customer satisfaction" (National Performance Review, 1998, p. 4).

Walking The Dog

There is ample evidence that one of the leading factors in attracting and retaining students in today's competitive environment relies on an institution's ability to increase convenience and/or service. The B-W adult program has embraced this strategy at all levels – from increasing scheduling options tenfold to such simple ideas as providing special **adult** student-oriented information in their schedule booklet. Although many of these efforts have simply relied on common sense and been based upon information gathered in surveys, exit interviews, and focus groups, some were derived through an ongoing process of brain-storming and encouragement to think "outside the box."

The B-W program once again looked at best practices, starting with the department store, Nordstroms, which was cited as one of the study partners in the *Best Practices Report* – a report of the National Performance Review that was headed by

Vice President Al Gore in 1998. In this report, Gore articulates the distinction between courtesy and world-class courtesy – the ultimate objective of the B-W program. "Courtesy: Using accepted and appropriate manners, as interpreted from the customer's perspective to **meet** the expectations of the customer. World-Class Courtesy: Using exceptional manners, as interpreted from the customer's perspective, to **exceed** the expectations of the customer" (p.5).

Nordstrom's customer service is legendary – there are numerous examples that have been cited as typical of their commitment to world-class courtesy: A customer enters a Nordstrom store with her dog. An employee quickly explains that no pets are allowed but the employee would happily walk the dog while the customer shops. And, "Many people have heard the story of the woman who was helped by Nordstrom employees with her flat tire in front of their store" (*World Class Courtesy*, 1998, p. 21). In both cases, the Nordstrom employees saw an opportunity to provide exceptional service and were empowered to act on it.

As B-W Lifelong Learning sought further guidelines to assist in informing its own mission, it selected those characteristics employed by companies dedicated to world-class courtesy in order to improve customer satisfaction and their own bottom line. Each of the organizations studied exhibited the following characteristics:

- The organization's cultural climate reflects a commitment to meeting and exceeding customer expectations.
- Senior leaders demonstrate by example the organization's commitment to exceptional courtesy.
- Employees are empowered to fully meet the needs of their customers.
- Courtesy is practiced by everyone throughout the entire organization.
- Specific and ongoing training in courtesy is provided.
- Formal and informal screening techniques are used to hire employees with exceptional skills in courtesy.
- The organization establishes systems to measure the value of its services to customers.
- Services are provided seamlessly from the customer's perspective.
- There is zero tolerance for discourteous service.
- All the organizations found that courtesy improves customer loyalty (*World Class Courtesy*, 1998, p. 6).

Finally, the Division of Lifelong Learning drew from the existent Baldwin-Wallace College slogan to draw greater attention to its own initiatives in this area. The slogan, "We provide a quality education with a personal touch," was already practiced by many of the employees at the college. It provided an excellent starting point from which to launch the "Walk the Dog" campaign to achieve an even greater level of customer service and satisfaction

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Results

In the year since B-W first made its commitment to upgrading this program, a significant number of events have confirmed that it is enjoying reinvigoration. In addition to a turnaround in enrollment, the number of options available to adult learners has

significantly increased as well. As a result, the program has enjoyed a level of vitality not previously encountered. Lifelong Learning at B-W has responded by trying to meet the needs of the students served through greater sensitivity and awareness of outstanding practices employed by those organizations that have already established distinctive empires of their own. Specifically, the following initiatives are already in place and being utilized by Lifelong Learning:

1. **Weekend scheduling** – A significant increase of options in the weekend schedule. Formerly, B-W had offered weekend college on two weekends a month with each course scheduled on both Saturday and Sunday. Conflicts arose for students who had obligations on either day or had to be out of town for one of the weekends. If one weekend had a conflict, the student was advised not to take weekend courses that semester. Because this schedule also had a limited of time slots available, more than 50% of the courses were offered in one "prime" time slot. If a student enrolled in a course, more than twenty other courses offered at the same time were eliminated. A new schedule offering 18 different weekend options was implemented. This schedule offers Saturday- and Sunday-only courses and courses with a variety of options so that something is offered every weekend. The courses are evenly distributed between the different time slots available. As a result students have a much better opportunity to select a course that meets their particular scheduling needs for that semester.

2. **Accelerated courses** – Lifelong Learning promoted a series of conversations with the faculty to determine andragogical guidelines for accelerated courses. Subsequent schedules have reflected greater interest in this area supported by a better sense of appropriateness of fit.

3. **Adult schedule** – A new adult-only schedule was designed and published. Only evening and weekend courses were included, supported by information that was devoted exclusively to adult needs. For instance, the adult schedule detailed tuition reimbursement programs, financial aid packages specific to adults, and calendar information for the evening and weekend schedule formats. The schedule also provided information about where adults coming directly from work could find a snack or a cup of coffee. Although each of these actions was intended to exceed the expectations of the adult students, it was another feature that achieved the greatest approval and enthusiasm among adult learners: a calendar that displayed when each course required for degree completion would be offered in the next three years.

4. **Student advising** – A significant shift in attitude regarding student advising took place. Previously, an assumption was made that adults didn't necessarily require advising. Now, the Evening and Weekend College is moving toward compulsory advising for all adult students with a new director of advising to be in place within the year. Although there is extensive research to support the desirability of good advising for adults (Maehl, 2000), the initial decision to emphasize advising more was also based upon information drawn from focus groups where some students

reported that they had erroneously registered for unnecessary courses under the previous system.

5. **Transformation course** – Once again, there is plentiful research regarding the efficacy of offering an introductory course to support adult students re-entering college or attending for the first time (Bash, Lighty & Tebrock, 1999). The introduction of this course represented another strong signal to adult students that they were in a supportive environment.

6. **Immersion courses** – One of the first initiatives undertaken was the creation of these one-week format three-credit courses. Not only did they satisfy students' requests for greater variety of accelerated courses, they also enabled the dialogue among the faculty about accelerated courses to be placed in clearer perspective.

7. **Exit interviews for graduates** – Although this initiative did not directly impact on the delivery of better services to the students, the participants were able to supply extensive feedback about future initiatives.

8. **Faculty and advisor development** – Lifelong Learning created a series of interventions to assist faculty and advisors working with adults. As a result, these constituents began to demonstrate greater sensitivity to the needs of the adult learner.

9. **Certificate emphasis** – Certificates designed to be completed in two semesters are offered to students with or without a bachelor's degree. These certificates provide a depth of knowledge in a particular subject area. Certificates offered include Accounting, Communications, Computer Information Systems, Human Resources, Organizational Development, Sales Management, and Applied Software Applications. Certificates allow students to reach a milestone quickly and can later decide to complete a degree if desired.

10. **Free Apples** – All adult students will be able to pick up a free apple from the Center for Lifelong Learning office on their way to class. More than just a nutritious snack, the apple symbolizes the commitment to make the B-W college experience as personable, satisfying, and rewarding as possible – thus, exceeding expectations.

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TEACHING FOR WISDOM--IS IT POSSIBLE?

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Much madness is divinest sense/to a discerning eye
--Emily Dickinson

We hardly know what wisdom is, much less how to teach it. Is wisdom something that can be deliberately and intentionally learned, or does it just happen, through maturity and experience? At the same time, we do know the components of health, both physical and emotional: regular exercise, good diet, lack of smoking and excessive drinking, family, friends, satisfying work. Is it not possible, then, to strive to become wiser if we know the components of wisdom?

Typically, people today shy away from the topic of wisdom. It seems too big, too abstract, too distant, too removed from their own lives. They think of saints or of "great leaders" whose lives and aspirations seem beyond their reach, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. or Gandhi. "I don't operate in realms like this," they think. "I'm just leading my own life, trying to raise my kids and do my job. Wisdom is a quality bestowed upon older people who have lived a lot and who have the time to reflect on what they have seen. Me, I'm just trying to get through the week. Forget wisdom!" I hear statements like these whenever I bring up the subject of wisdom.

Not only does it seem remote, but it also is slippery and elusive. Like water, wisdom is everywhere around us, like the water in all living creatures we barely notice it; like water we need it; like water it runs through our fingers when we try to hold it.

To try to grasp it and hence know it, I have made a "cup" through research consisting of conducting interviews and analyzing the literature in a number of fields including psychology, education, religion, spirituality, philosophy, and the written arts (poetry, novels, plays).

The Research Project

About two dozen thoughtful and insightful leaders mostly in the Twin Cities area have been interviewed for their views on what wisdom means to them in this phenomenological study. I began the pilot phase began by contacting people I knew and respected, such as a professor at the University of Minnesota who has studied ethical leaders and a Supreme Court Justice of the State of Minnesota. They were asked the questions that form the basis for the on-going investigation, namely:

- Tell me about a person you know whom you consider wise.
- Where did you learn about wisdom? What or who were your models? Did you have a mentor or a person to guide you?
- Can you think of a time that you did something you'd consider wise?
- How do you think you got whatever wisdom or insight you have?
- Have there been any major transformations or defining moments in your life in terms of the way you look at or understand the world?

- How do you think people get to be wise?
- Where can we find wisdom today?
- How can wisdom be encouraged in our society?

After the pilot phase of in-depth interviews with about 6 people, using the snowball method I moved to the exploratory phase of talking with about 18 more people whose names were suggested by the first six or by others in the exploratory group. This group included ministers, nuns, university presidents and professors, public servants, activists, and business people.

I did not limit myself entirely to this group, however. When I encountered people I wanted to talk to whose names had not been previously suggested, I did. For example, at a conference I interviewed a past president of a major Southern university. And while visiting my parents I engaged a retired minister in conversation about wisdom. Because so little has been articulated directly about the topic and because the study was in its exploratory phase, I felt that the research would be enriched by seizing the moment and talking with people who either seemed to have some wisdom themselves or who could talk insightfully about it.

The exploratory phase has now been completed. Although about 24 people were interviewed, which is more than usual for a phenomenological study (Creswell, 1998), it seemed necessary to do so in this phase because the phenomenon under study is so complex. The next phase will include more interviews and may become grounded theory. At this point, however, although I have developed a working model or heuristic device for understanding wisdom, the study remains phenomenological as I am continuing to explore the meaning of wisdom according to the experiences and thoughts of the people interviewed. Because the topic is so large and undefined, I feel justified in continuing to clarify, define, and develop working models that can cast light on some of the various facets of wisdom.

The next and perhaps last phase will be more structured. When three people from the exploratory group name a person, then he or she will be interviewed. Hence, this time around, each person interviewed will have been recommended by at least three informed observers. A greater attempt to include persons of color and people regarded wise but who do not necessarily hold positions of leadership will be made this time. The same questions pertain, but it is hoped that a deeper level of probing will take place.

Three Components of Wisdom

Much of the literature on wisdom breaks it into different kinds. Aristotle discusses practical and theoretical wisdom; the Christian tradition calls it practical vs. sapiential wisdom, the distinction being the difference between "knowledge-rich pragmatics" as Baltes and Straudinger (2000) put it and a deep understanding of the human condition, especially its uncertain and existential aspects. Others find three forms of wisdom. For example, Orwoll and Perlmutter (1990) discuss intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal wisdom. Other researchers (Birren & Fisher, 1990) conceive of wisdom as being a blending of cognitive, affective, and conative elements.

Like the latter researchers, based on the interviews, I also find that three components of wisdom help us understand it. Wisdom, according to an analysis of the interviews, includes a strong cognitive component (discernment). The affective is equally important—wise people care about what is happening around them. But while Birren and

Fisher (1990) consider the conative elements as a separate category, I combine them with the affective, arriving at a second component called empathy and engagement. Finally, a different third category has arisen from the interviews, one that I am calling strength of character until and if I can find a better term.

Discernment

The discernment qualities of wisdom are the cognitive ones relating to "seeing the big picture and knowing what weight or importance to give things" (businessman), "looking at the underlying forces and not being distracted by the surface symptoms" (Episcopal priest and consultant), and "a certain kind of judgment that comes with experience and insight about human nature" (college professor). Or, as Czikszentmihalyi and Ratunde (1990) put it, wisdom is a cognitive process to try to understand the world in a disinterested way.

Detachment is a key element of this discernment or cognitive set of qualities of wisdom. One has to be detached in order to take the long view and to report in a disinterested way what is observed. This disinterest leads to a second element: balanced judgment that inspires trust. We tend to trust people whose judgment is not coming from an ideological place or who have a personal agenda they are thrusting upon us. When we want good advice about a sticky problem, we seek a discerning eye.

An additional cognitive ability further contributes to discernment: the ability to take multiple perspectives. Kegan (1995) states that this capacity marks the movement from third to fourth order thinking. That is, a person is able to get outside of their own psychological surround and into the point of view of another person, thereby bringing about a "more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative" perspective, according to Mezirow (1990, p. 14). Besides the personal, one can also learn to take the perspectives of various fields and disciplines in a method called imbrication (Zeldin, 1995) or layering, where an issue such as power and respect (from his book) is examined through discussions of slavery, the domestication of animals, and religion.

Empathy and Engagement

No matter how far you can see, how discerning your vision, how layered your thoughts, people will think of you as cold, not wise, unless you also bring compassion and caring with the perception. It matters not the truths you can see unless you also care about the people and the world around you.

And, along with the empathy comes the action to do something about it. As one activist said, "I don't think you will find someone who is wise who leads a passive life." We don't all need to march in protests to show activity, however. Writing and speaking count as well, also (and this should be a comfort for academics). It is the image of the armchair philosopher or the solitary guru on the mountaintop that makes the Western mind link engagement (actually doing something) with empathy.

Interviewees to a person agreed that wisdom is incomplete without action and action is unfounded without compassion and connection to that which is discerned. "You have to care about people," said a Supreme Court Justice. "Wisdom is about action, not just being," said a university professor. Here, then, the affective and conative elements of wisdom are combined.

Strength of Character

Hidden from view like the roots of a tree, yet as necessary for existence as trunk, branches, and leaves, the strength of character component of wisdom is largely invisible as direct behavior. It consists of "being" qualities such as honesty, integrity, courage, self-knowledge, self-transcendence, and openness. You have to be at least as honest with yourself as you are with others. "Probity," is the term a high-ranking public servant gave this quality—intense and unflinching honesty.

Integrity—being the same on the inside as on the outside, "walking the talk."

Courage, said an activist, is necessary to wisdom: "Wisdom comes from going as far as you can and taking chances, doing things you are afraid of doing. Wisdom is strength." Without the courage to carry through on what you believe to be true, wisdom will elude you.

Self-knowledge: Wise people, according to the interviewees, know themselves well. They have "faced the slimy things" as the activist quoted above put it about her time of facing her shadow while in solitary confinement for ten days. Almost all the people I spoke with mentioned somehow or another the need for self knowledge, particularly acknowledging their more negative parts.

Self-transcendence was mentioned not only by the ministers I interviewed but also by an elected politician and educators. Here are their own words: "You can't be wise unless you can get outside of yourself" (politician). "You have to have boundaries way outside of yourself" (educator). What does this mean, getting outside of yourself? Orwoll & Perlmutter (1990) put it slightly differently: Wisdom entails both exceptional personality development, cognitive growth, and "transcendence of conventional levels of self-absorption. This freedom from self-absorption permits attention to more universal, collective, or global concerns" (p. 163).

This self-transcendence and freedom from self-absorption allows the wise person to act for the common endeavor. As a professor put it: "Wisdom is about not always pursuing your own interests (a necessary but not sufficient quality). It is also about being committed to the common good."

Thus, three components of wisdom: discernment, empathy and engagement, and strength of character (or cognitive abilities, affective and conative abilities, and strength of character) all contribute to our understanding of wisdom. The question arises, of course, about our ability to teach—or learn—wisdom. Is it possible?

Teaching for Wisdom

Is it possible to teach these qualities? Can they be learned intentionally? I am experimenting with a tool that, given the above understanding of wisdom, will help people ascertain the extent of their development in the three components of wisdom. Personal or group consultation, coaching, or mentoring will help them isolate which components they would like to work on and how they can do so. At this writing, this instrument is in progress.

For those in the classroom, I refer them to the new book by Taylor, Marienau, and Fiddler (2000) on developing adult learners. Because my belief is that wisdom resides mostly in what Kegan (1995) calls upper fourth and fifth orders of consciousness, if not in realms of spirit that go beyond conventional levels of ego development, any teaching to help people move to higher, more inclusive stages or meaning perspectives, the better. (See, for example, Wilber's (2000) book with its integrated charts on ego, cognitive, and moral development as well as stages of spirituality.)

The interviewees also shared some ideas on how people get to be wise, some of which can be adapted to learning situations. Let me say here that I am speaking not only about direct teaching but also more appropriately about the general question of how people become wiser—and that includes all of us. Suggestions from the people interviewed include these:

-- travel
-- read, read, read
-- have experiences and reflect on them
-- find a mentor, someone you admire, observe her, and try to emulate her
-- develop a spiritual practice
-- try to get on the other person's terms, that is, do what you can to see the world from the way they do
-- be unflinching in your knowledge of yourself
-- develop the ability to understand a situation as it really is. To do this, you need to be able to see clearly without your own stereotypes getting in the way.

Ways of talking about wisdom

Here are some "definitions" or ways of talking about wisdom if you wish to pursue the topic with others. Some of these phrases may draw the listener in to the conversation more than that big word "wisdom."

-- Generosity of spirit
-- Good advice
-- Using knowledge appropriately
-- Enduring truths
-- Unusually inclusive and undistorted meaning perspectives
-- Deep understanding of the human condition engaged for the common good

Daloz (1999) talked about wisdom this way: "We become every more discriminating in our ability to see the world on its own terms, or as others see it, and ever more able to make sense of it despite its growing complexity—able to make sense of it in ways that both retain our own sense of meaning and yet respect its diversity" (p. 64).

Summary

If there is one thing that I have learned from my research on wisdom, it is that wisdom is more about us, all of us, than it is about me. It has to do with continuing to act in our own self-interest while adding more encompassing spheres of consideration. It has less to do with angling for self-gain and more to do with deepened capacities for attention, equanimity, detachment, and compassion.

If I were asked to describe a person I think of as wise, here is what I'd say: He knew what were the parts and what they were parts of, how the parts fit together into the whole, and how to be a good person with regards to both the parts and the whole. This kind of person knows about all of us.

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THORNY ISSURES OF RELIABILITY, VALIDITY, AND FAIRNESS WHEN EVALUATING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

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Portfolio assessment is a popular topic in adult education literature. Much has been written about the use of portfolios to document prior learning, including the extent to which programs attain their learning goals (Johnson & Rose, 1997; Popham, 1999). Colleges and universities have taken a step further by utilizing portfolio assessment, at least to some extent, to make decisions concerning courses and programs. But, thorny issues must be recognized if portfolio assessment is to accurately measure learning and program goals.

While articles and books are plentiful on how to develop portfolios, most offer only general hints on how to score and evaluate the portfolios. A few describe how to increase interrater reliability, however other types of reliability are not addressed. Furthermore, the issues of validity and fairness are seldom examined. When discussing the status of portfolios, Wolf (1995) stated, "...the professional literature is rich in rhetoric, but slender in empirical evidence" (p. 32). Questions have been raised about the extent to which portfolio assessments are able to deliver valid, reliable, and fair measures of learning (Worthen, White, Fan & Sudweeks, 1998; Resnick, 1996). If courses and programs for adult learners are evaluated, at least in part, using portfolio assessment, it is necessary to have reasonable confidence that the process is really measuring what it purports to be measuring (validity), is measuring the characteristics consistently (reliability), and is not unduly effected by bias and other contaminating factors (fairness). Therefore, it is essential to follow a series of procedures to verify the validity, reliability, and fairness of portfolio assessment.

The preciseness of validity, reliability, and equity depends on the purpose of the evaluation. The higher the stakes associated with the portfolio's use, the greater the effort that must be taken to ensure the assessment is an accurate measure (Popham, 1999). In some cases, high-stakes decisions concerning students' careers are being made without adhering to basic assessment procedures. As the stakes increase, additional caution is necessary to show that evaluations are valid, reliable, and fair. Documentation and reporting of validity and reliability are more rigorous when the scoring will result in a recommendation for a degree than when the scoring results in a course grade. Furthermore, procedures are less rigorous for evaluating the usefulness of a course than for evaluating accreditation of a program.

We have been developing a series of procedures that maintain the psychometric integrity of this type of assessment for evaluators of portfolios. This paper provides the initial, basic, non-statistical steps to increase validity, reliability, and fairness in the evaluation of portfolios. Due to the wide variance in

experiences, backgrounds, and education, these issues are especially important in adult learner programs.

Steps to Increase the Validity, Reliability, and Fairness
The following five steps increase validity, reliability, and fairness. Figure 1 is an overview of the steps that are described below.

Figure 1. Steps to Establish Validity, Reliability, and Fairness

Steps	What To Do	What It Improves
1	Determine the programmatic learning goals.	Validity
2	Create a list of activities and a Table of Artifacts.	Validity
3	Establish criteria standards and rubrics.	Reliability
4	Offer choices of ways to demonstrate each goal.	Fairness
5	Obtain multiple measures of each goal.	Reliability & Validity

Step 1. *Determine the programmatic learning goals.* What types of skills, dispositions, and knowledge does a graduate from the program need to demonstrate? Carefully defined learning goals determine the portfolio contents and are essential to assure validity of the assessment. The questions, "What concepts and skills are we measuring?", "Do portfolio artifacts relate to the same concepts and skills?" and, "How will we use this information?" must be answered before determining whether the portfolio process is really measuring what it purports to be measuring. These three questions are basic validity issues.

Identification of the goals of the program, and how to achieve those goals, are the first essential steps for using portfolio assessment. These goals must clearly state what skills are required of successful individuals for their particular field, and the goals must articulate what training and skills are needed to achieve success within that field. For example, a program will state the characteristics of a successful human resources professional and identify the type of training it can offer its students to become successful in the human resources field. Once these goals are identified, then the portfolio assessment can be developed. If the characteristics of the professional are accurately representative of individuals within the field, then the portfolio must demonstrate those skills and characteristics to attain construct validity. The collection of work within the portfolio, or the artifacts, must match the training and skills learned within the program to evaluate the program goals and achieve content validity. Third, the portfolio should predict success both in the program and the field to demonstrate predictive validity: a high quality portfolio demonstrating all of the goals of the program should equate to a successful professional in the field in the future.

Clearly identifying the goals of the program is the first step of ensuring a valid portfolio assessment, and this step should be carefully executed.

Validity is assumed by many educators to be strong in performance assessments (Wiggins, 1993; Hiebert, 1994; Guskey, 1994). A careful look indicates this might not always be true. In a professional leadership course, how does one know that artifacts in a portfolio are indicators of leadership? Resnick (1996) points out, "A random collection of tasks, no matter how large the number or how elegant the matrix design, cannot represent an individual's or group's competence in a field of knowledge or skill. The tasks must be systematically related to a careful definition of the field. This requirement takes us into questions of content and construct validity" (p. 13). She further explains, "There is no way to establish the construct validity of a collection of tasks in the absence of an agreed-upon framework that describes the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn and that should be sampled by the assessment...The absence of such frameworks has made it essentially impossible to deal sensibly with the problem of content or construct validity in assessment" (p. 14).

Adult learner programs have begun to realize the need for stating the program goals in order to develop valid assessments of those programs. One of the Principles of Good Practice for Alternative and External Degree Programs for Adults is, "Clearly articulated programmatic learning outcomes frame the comprehensive curriculum as well as specific learning experiences; in developing these outcomes the program incorporates general student goals" (as cited in Brewer & Sullivan, 2000, p. 26). Recently, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning has been working on a project to identify ways institutions can adapt practices to better serve adult learners. One of their key findings was, "The institution defines and assesses the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired by adult learners... " (ALFI, 1999). Although there seems to be some consensus within professional organizations that assessment of learning goals is part of good practices, the question is, "What are the specific learning goals?"

Analyzing the specific characteristics of successful individuals within the field is essential for developing clearly stated program goals. During the last few years, a number of professional organizations, such as the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs, the Human Resource Certification Institute, and the Financial Accounting Standards Board, have developed frameworks to describe the knowledge and skills that are necessary for effective professionals in their fields. Based on the concept of an ideal businessperson, experts have formed operational definitions of effective marketing specialists, bankers, and accountants, among others. These descriptions are characteristics or constructs of the theoretically ideal businessperson. For example, most professionals would agree that an ideal salesperson understands and uses a variety of marketing strategies; is knowledgeable of the community, product, and company; and maintains a profit. The portfolio assessment based on these frameworks will have construct validity if the operational definition truly matches the concept of the actual characteristics of an effective businessperson, and the portfolio accurately reflects those characteristics.

These frameworks answer the question, "What are we measuring?" A relatively safe way to increase validity is to begin with standards of the prototypical successful individual in the field established by these organizations. Because recognized experts in these fields develop most of these standards, program and course objectives that are based on professional organizations' standards will aid in both maintaining the realistic skills necessary for training and creating valid assessments that relate to and predict success in the field.

We are not advocating limiting program and course objectives to national, state, and professional standards. The uniqueness of colleges and universities is to some extent reflected in course objectives. For example, the University of Sioux Falls is a private, Christian school that emphasizes the integration of faith in professional practice. Therefore, we have added this objective into all our courses. When creating the program and course goals, directors or professors should examine both the national standards and those skills and training needed within their particular community.

The question, "What are we measuring?" refers to a theoretical description of attributes, knowledge, and skills needed by professionals. Statistical processes are available to measure the validity of objectives. Using the points mentioned in the first step of identifying program goals will help create valid assessments.

Step 2. *Create a list of activities that demonstrate each of the remaining goals.* The evaluators, an individual, or a committee may establish the criteria for selection of artifacts. The artifacts are the summaries of projects or events that elicit the knowledge, skills, and attributes tied to the standard assessed. They are systematically related to a careful definition of the standard. The validity of the collection of artifacts is based on an agreed-upon framework that describes the skills of professionals in the field. Without such a framework, there is no way to establish what the content of assessment tasks should be or how to interpret the collection of tasks as representative of a standard (Resnick, 1996)..

It is essential that students and judges understand the criteria of what types of artifacts to include. Most state and national standards are defined by descriptors as previously described. Still, evaluators have had many questions when it comes to deciding what portfolio entries validly measure a standard.

The first part of step two is to reach agreement on the essential components of the portfolio assessment. For example, many standards for adult learners include an information technology skill. What are the components and parameters of information technology skills? Do they include such things as power point presentations, Internet usage to improve global communication within industry, and video conferencing for meetings? What else would they contain? During this step, the parameters of the standard are established. Carefully matching the contents included within the portfolio with the informational technology skill, for example, would strengthen the content validity of the assessment.

Anyone who has evaluated portfolios has encountered the Wheelbarrow Syndrome. The main symptom of the Wheelbarrow Syndrome is unbridled

accumulation of items in a portfolio. Students with this affliction deliver crates containing everything they have done that remotely relates to the program or course. Perhaps it is based on a fear of leaving something out. Perhaps it is based on the belief that more is better. Regardless of the cause, too many assessment pieces can lead to an unmanageable, jumble of information. When this happens, the potential validity of this type of evaluation diminishes. A counterbalance to unrestrained inclusion is to establish limits on the number and length of artifacts. This limitation forces students to analyze entries to identify what items best demonstrate attainment of an objective. This process of differentiating among several possible artifacts is a learning experience in itself.

The next part of step two is to brainstorm types of artifacts that can be used to assess each standard. Because performance assessment is by definition, the orchestration, integration, and application of skills in meaningful contexts, it is important to identify assessments that will cover key elements rather than isolated skills (Johnson & Rose, 1997). The intent is to develop assessments that capture the actual challenges faced by business professionals. The extent to which the assessment is authentic varies on a continuum. For example, when assessing a business student's information technology skills, a typing test of keyboarding skills would be on the low end of the continuum. A five-minute power point presentation might be in the middle of the continuum. And a video of the student leading a real videoconference meeting during an internship is at the top end of the continuum. The evaluators and/or instructors form a list of the types of artifacts that are permissible to demonstrate the goals of the program or course.

From this list, one can construct a Table of Artifacts. This table consists of a grid similar to a table of specifications that lists the goals across the top and the artifacts down the side. Each artifact must clearly be connected with a goal to increase content validity of the portfolio assessment (Gredler, 1999). The table will answer the question, "How does the artifact demonstrate the program's or course's goals?"

Inferences about the individual's capabilities must be limited to the knowledge and skills represented in the artifacts present in the portfolio, however the portfolio contents should indicate the potential of the individual for achievement in the field. In 1985 standards for tests were altered to define validity as the "appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores" (American Educational Research Association *et al.*, 1985, p.9). The meaning of the score is tied to the range of tasks and situations that it generalizes and transfers to (Messick, 1994). For example, when evaluating the predictive validity of a portfolio for accounting licensure, the question needs to be asked, "To what extent do the artifacts show potential to meet the AICPA standards for CPAs?" The role of validity is to explain the degree of mastery of concepts and processes that the portfolio assessed. Therefore, predictions about student performance can only be made to situations similar to those represented in the portfolio.

Two additional aspects of portfolio assessment, reliability and fairness, either contribute to validity or point to steps that might be taken to improve validity. They are part of the actual construction and evaluation of the portfolio.

Step 3. *Establish criteria standards using national guidelines and samples of professionals' work.* Performance-based assessment is most vulnerable to attack on grounds of poor reliability (Linn, 1994). Criticisms focus on poor reliability across raters and across tasks. Two tools, benchmarks and rubrics, are used to improve reliability across raters and across time.

Rubrics, a popular buzzword, are descriptors of behaviors that demonstrate progress toward a learning goal. A rubric is a scoring guide used to evaluate the quality of portfolios (Popham, 1999). Rubrics distinguish acceptable from unacceptable responses on the evaluation standards and can be used to judge isolated skills or an entire portfolio. In the simplest form, rubrics determine the worth of the mass of data in portfolios. Unobservable knowledge, skills, and attributes must be characterized in terms of established, observable behaviors that convey evidence about an understanding. Students' self-described actions accompanied by examples of their work can be evaluated along a continuum of changes in their performance--the changes that occur as knowledge and complex cognitive strategies are acquired. Rubrics are descriptions of these performance changes at various levels of acquisition (Glaser, 1997). They provide the framework for judging what differences exist on the continuum of developing achievement between novice behavior and expert behavior. Although evaluators cannot observe knowledge or attribute states, they can make inferences from the portfolio evidence (Mislevy, 1996). Therefore, agreement must be reached on the scoring criteria that will be used to determine what constitutes excellence of entries, mastery of standards, and evidence of social attributes. It is necessary to establish a shared understanding of how to interpret performance levels from the contents of portfolios to increase the reliability of the assessment.

Benchmarks specify tasks, attitudes, and applications that are expected along the way toward attainment of expertise (Johnson & Rose, 1997). By identifying differences between the properties and characteristics of developing achievement of expert and novice in a profession, it is possible to separate student responses along a continuum of growth toward professionalism. Glaser (1997) identifies differences between expert and novice responses in integrating patterns and principles of knowledge, effective problem solving, and factual, declarative knowledge. Through portfolios, evaluators can successfully assess novice versus expert performance in complex situations.

The third step, which increases reliability of portfolio assessment, is to develop scoring rubrics. To be useful, rubrics must have the following characteristics. A rubric must:

- communicate clearly the desired standard of achievement,
- describe specific and observable behavior,
- create a logical progression toward an objective,

- reduce the likelihood of inaccurate scoring,
- help participants know in what ways they can improve, and
- be applicable for the entire program to show improvement over time (Popham, 1999).

To use portfolios for evaluation, the rubrics are scaled. Evaluative scales judge performance and competence based on an underlying standard of excellence. For courses, many professors use a four-level rating scale of achievement to describe the differences between experts, competent, novice, and inadequate performance. Faculty will have to decide on the number of categories they want to use to differentiate among students. In general, the number of categories depends on how the scores will be used. If the scores are used towards a course grade, a five-point scale provides more differentiation among students. Conversely, if the portfolios are to demonstrate competency, a binary scale of pass/fail will suffice. In general, limit the number of scale divisions to only those that are necessary.

We use the scale shown in Table 3 to score graduate course portfolios (adapted from Glaser, 1997).

Table 3. Evaluative Scale for Graduate Portfolios

Exemplary performance.	**Grade=A**
Applied correct knowledge. Assessed underlying, meaningful patterns and principles. Analyzed problems and formed a model from which inferences were made. Applied self-regulatory skills such as predicted the difficulty of problems, allocated time appropriately, noted their errors or failures, and checked questionable solutions.	
Competent performance with some minor flaws.	**Grade=B**
Assessed some meaningful patterns and principles. Usually analyzed problems and formed a model from which they made inferences. Applied some self-regulatory skills such as predicted the difficulty of problems, allocated time appropriately, noted their errors or failures, and checked questionable solutions.	
Some serious flaws in performance.	**Grade=C**
Dealt with the surface features of a problem. Generated a superficial model from which to make decisions and inferences. Principles and theories were not implemented appropriately. Difficulty with self-regulatory skills such as predicting the difficulty of problems, allocating time appropriately, noting their errors, and checking solutions.	
Failed to successfully complete the performance tasks.	**Grade=F**
Tasks are incomplete or did not meet the minimum criteria.	

Clear, unambiguous rubrics are difficult to write. They must capture the essential ingredients of the concept being measured without becoming cumbersome and overly detailed (Popham, 1997). The rubric must include some detail to increase reliability among observers and over several evaluation periods, however there are dangers of becoming too specific in the descriptors. Do we define "leads a meeting effectively" as "never, sometimes, or usually?" Or, do we develop more precise rubrics such as "less than five out of 10 situations,

five out of 10 situations, more than five out of 10 situations?" While the first group of rubrics is vague, the second group is not only cumbersome, it is task specific.

One problem that happens frequently is writing rubrics to match the skills for a particular task. Skill-driven descriptors place the emphasis on the performance rather than on the underlying constructs that are inherent in a standard, and therefore reduce the assessment to a series of skills that limits generalizability (Messick, 1994). Conversely, rubrics that are based on the underlying constructs, run the risk of being too generic. In the example of leadership in meetings, one component is inspiring others to think deeply. This descriptor can legitimately have multiple meanings for different situations and different judges raising the issue of reliability. Thus, to increase reliability of scoring rubrics for portfolio assessment, one may sacrifice validity. This concern should be recognized when creating and evaluating portfolios.

Step 4. *Offer choices of ways students may demonstrate each goal to reduce extraneous variables from interfering with the student's output and success.* Fairness is giving all participants an equal chance of performing at their best levels and judging their work in a consistent, nonarbitary, and nonprejudicial way. The questions raised are: "Is the required evidence equitable?" and "Are there any university or course policies or practices that might lead to an increase or decrease in scores with no connection to the concepts or capabilities being assessed?" Performance tasks should show the students' capabilities, but they cannot give some students an advantage over others.

One example of inequity is the availability of up-to-date technology. Some students may have greater access to technology than others, thus affecting their training and the quality of their portfolio assessments. Another source of inequity is internship placements. One student might be placed in an environment that encourages growth in program goals, whereas, another student may be placed in an unmotivating or unchallenging environment. With differing internships, the learning gained, and therefore the portfolios produced, would also vary. These two examples are beyond the student's control and demonstrate the issue of fairness when evaluating portfolios and learner capabilities. To preserve fairness, evaluators may need to take varying opportunities into account when examining the portfolios, or they can offer options to all students.

Diversity among students must be respected by assuring that all students have an equal opportunity to show their strengths. The key is to include more than one way to demonstrate a standard. Students select the one that best fits their learning styles, schedules, interests, and resources. Participation in how to demonstrate a competency is one of the key features of a fair representation of achievement and ability. Although some of the specific contents such as a resume, table of contents, test scores or letters of recommendation are common requirements for all students, the candidate is responsible for deciding what methods best represent a competency for successful completion of a program.

Step 5. *Have multiple measures of each goal.* According to Chase (1999), "All assessment is based on samples of behavior, and all samples are likely to

represent the skill with some inaccuracy" (p.34). Multiple measures of the same objective are needed to reliably estimate a student's competence. The question, "How many examples of projects are needed?" is the classic problem of another form of validity, generalizability. Recent work on generalizability in performance assessment suggests between 10 and15 tasks are needed to achieve confidence (Linn, 1994, p. 10; Resnick, 1996, p. 12). With several goals to measure, the number of tasks quickly becomes unmanageable. Each entry takes time to complete and time to score. If 10 to 15 tasks are necessary to eliminate the probability that chance factors influenced the outcome, such as differences in field locations where students performed the projects, then the establishment of reliability across tasks becomes daunting.

The challenge for the evaluator is to have enough information to make inferences about the student's work without becoming overwhelmed with the data. While multiple artifacts can represent the range of abilities, trade-offs are required between breadth of content coverage and resources to evaluate the portfolios. "Portfolios are a sample of tasks a professional can perform, not all the tasks of assessment results" (Linn, p.6). Candidates cannot place dozens of artifacts in their portfolios for every standard, if several criteria are evaluated. A balance between under-representation of evidence and generalizability must be found. Too few artifacts may sacrifice both reliability and validity, however too many artifacts become impractical and overwhelming.

One solution is to have students collect examples for each learning goal that demonstrates successful completion of the program. For example, if a program has eight to 10 learning goals, a student could place a few (i.e., between two and four) artifacts per goal to demonstrate successful completion of the whole program. Although the reliability and validity would be weak for individual goals with so few artifacts, overall, an evaluator could examine the results of the goals collectively to gain an understanding of the candidate's capabilities.

Programs should require their students to select representative artifacts out of the many examples of their work. Each entry should be the best example from their studies, and students should have many options to choose from. With several options, portfolio assessment gains reliability, even if only a few examples are selected. Portfolio assessment accounts for small differences due to situational variables, and an isolated poor example from the entire collection of work does not necessarily indicate the student has failed to meet the learning goals. Unlike other, more traditional forms of assessment, portfolios allow students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their skills, and students can select work they feel is the most representative of their success in the program. Thus, even two or three artifacts per goal can collectively be reliable for evaluating success in the program, and this type of representation is more manageable.

Benefits of Portfolio Assessment

Are portfolios worth the resources and effort? While traditional evaluation is valued for its objectivity and scientific measurement, portfolio assessment

yields information not available through other forms. Portfolios capture the complexities of situations, offer insights into the person's individuality, share responsibility for professional growth, create ownership and commitment for evaluation at all university levels, and increase reflective practice. The benefits outweigh the efforts.

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USING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT FOR GENERAL EDUCATION IN AN ADULT DEGREE PROGRAM

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A special program for adult students is an important innovation, removing barriers for a population in need of higher education. Yet for a higher education community entrenched in traditions, innovative programs bring about skepticism. For this reason, assessment in adult degree programs is of prime importance. Innovators must demonstrate that student outcomes are comparable or exceed those of traditional programs.

At Indiana Wesleyan University, a fast-growing adult program required assessment measures that could inform changes and ultimately verify the validity of the degree. In November, 1998, a full time Coordinator of Assessment was added to assist faculty and administrators with assessment plans and data collection. The Coordinator of Assessment works with all ten adult degree programs. Together they developed program objectives and means to measure those objectives.

Attached is the Assessment Plan for General Education that was developed for the Adult and Professional Studies Program by a team of faculty, the Director of General Studies, and the Coordinator of Assessment (see Table 1). The objectives, which have been in place for many years, are known as the "Ten Across Skills" and permeate all Adult and Professional Studies undergraduate curricula. In the second column of the attached Assessment Plan, the objectives are specifically tied to the Indiana Wesleyan University student outcome expectations (World Changer Outcomes). In this way it is clear that General Education in the Adult and Professional Studies Division is part of the general mission of the University.

In the third column of the attached Assessment Plan are the means of measuring the achievement of each objective. These include two direct measures: the Academic Profile (a standardized test published by ETS), and specific writing samples compiled in a student portfolio (called the Personal Learning Anthology). Faculty and administrators set specific criteria by which to judge successful achievement of each objective.

The student portfolio designed to assess General Education at Indiana Wesleyan, is authentic assessment since it consists of the actual products of coursework which are directly related to program objectives (Palomba and Banta, 1999, p. 116). Many of these exhibits require students to apply skills in a real world setting so they are particularly valuable in assessing learning outcomes.

The name "Personal Learning Anthology (PLA)" was chosen to avoid confusion with the Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio or with portfolios of

student work done within some writing courses. Certainly the term "portfolio" has come to mean many things: from exhibits to show potential employers, to collections of all student work. The Personal Learning Anthology at Indiana Wesleyan is intended to demonstrate actual learning in a variety of contexts. It is designed to show growth in learning over a student's academic career in the adult program.

Development Process

The process of designing a General Education portfolio began with the Curriculum Council developing an ambitious four-month schedule for designing and implementing a system to collect and assess student work. Beginning in November 1998, a Task Force of fourteen representative faculty met several times to not only write appropriate learning objectives that were tied to university outcomes, but also to design the components that would measure these objectives. The third step was to set the criteria we as a faculty would consider proficiency and/or adequate improvement throughout the program. Then, there needed to be a system for collecting and scoring the students' work. At that time, a faculty team would score the assignments, discuss the results, and close the assessment loop by making program improvements.

The Task Force started by gaining consensus on the wording of ten General Education objectives and also agreed that a portfolio of General Education exhibits would be designed as the primary assessment tool. A secondary assessment tool is the Academic Profile, a nationally-normed test measuring general knowledge areas of Humanities, Social Science, and Natural Science, as well as proficiency levels in reading, writing, critical thinking, and math.

In order to design what should be included in a General Education portfolio, all General Education faculty were polled for recommendations of the best assignments that would assess student academic achievement appropriate to the learning objectives in each course. The Task Force then took these recommendations along with their own experiences in a variety of General Education courses, and decided on the best courses and assignments to use in assessing General Education learning.

Components of PLA

It was decided that the Personal Leaning Anthology would consist of exhibits from 15 General Education courses in their 62-hour program (See Table 2). At least one assignment would become the exhibit that addressed each of the ten General Education objectives. Some assignments measured more than one objective. Many appropriate assignments already existed; others needed to be written into the curriculum. Rubrics were written and piloted by the Faculty Task Force members in order to standardize evaluation of the portfolio submissions. It was decided to incorporate a midpoint and final review of the Personal Learning Anthologies.

An added challenge in an adult program is to demonstrate that students are gaining skills that they did not have before entering the program. To do this,

a series of pre/post assessments became part of the portfolio requirements. One of these was a writing sample students do in their first course, with the same in-class writing sample being part of the curriculum in their last course. Other pre/post assessments were in oral communication skills and teamwork.

The next task was to decide on how this would be implemented with faculty and students. Since Indiana Wesleyan's adult programs are a multi-site, accelerated degree program, there is a Curriculum Council and appointed faculty content experts who write the curriculum modules for each course. It was agreed that the curriculum modules would be the primary way the university would continually communicate the portfolio process to faculty and students. A schedule of revisions was put in place, with the first group of students beginning their portfolios February 24, 1999.

Faculty members were included in developing this assessment tool in a variety of ways. At the beginning, faculty workshops were held to explain the importance of assessment of student academic achievement. Faculty teams were included in the development of the overall General Education assessment plan, and then a representative team of faculty members dealt with implementation issues of the portfolio system after the assessment plan was adopted.

Faculty members were trained on the use of the Personal Learning Anthologies in the following ways:

a) Faculty who teach the first course received training on setting up the portfolio. This included faculty workshops as well as newsletters and memos at appropriate times in the development of the portfolio.
b) Faculty who taught at the *midpoint* and *final* reporting courses received instructions on how to collect the PLAs, complete the summary chart, and send in their reports. They did not grade the students' work from past classes; they merely counted to see that the exhibits were up-to-date in the portfolio. A special page in their curriculum Faculty Guides delineated how to do this. Large postage reply envelopes were provided for faculty to send in their reports to the Assessment Coordinator. In addition, student success at maintaining the PLA for the midpoint and final portfolio reviews was included in the computation of the grade for these two courses.
c) All faculty who teach General Education courses were reminded in their Faculty Guides to be sure that students put the proper assignment(s) in their General Education portfolio.

Students were also introduced in their first course to the idea of maintaining a portfolio during the course of their two years in the associate program. A notebook and dividers with tabs was supplied to students in their first course, which is called Principles and Practice of Lifelong Learning. A Table of Contents cover sheet informed students as to which assignment was required as the exhibit for each course. They also became aware of which learning objective was being assessed on the scoring summary chart (see Table 2) in the

curriculum modules for each General Education course. For the students, this collection of a variety of assignments throughout the program would build self-confidence and be ready to show employers and family.

In all training and instructions about the Personal Learning Anthology, a statement that copies of these portfolios will be reviewed by the Coordinator of Assessment for program assessment purposes was included.

Assessment Day

The primary purpose of the annual departmental Assessment Day was to "assess our assessment" to make needed improvements in the PLA process. Another purpose of this Assessment Day was to make curricular improvements so program objectives can be better achieved. Five of the ten program objectives were chosen for evaluation. This time, faculty chose five writing assignments which could be used to measure student progress on these objectives.

In preparation for the Assessment Day, the PLA's of two core groups were collected. These were the first two groups to reach the midpoint of the PLA compilation process. Copies were made of the assignments required for this assessment and then the PLA's were mailed back to the group's facilitator for distribution in class. The Coordinator of Assessment developed score sheets on which faculty could record scores.

On May 19, 2000, six faculty met to score the papers. They were divided into two groups of three. One group evaluated student progress on two objectives: critical thinking and Christian worldview. The other group evaluated student progress on information literacy, problem solving and ethical thought. They were instructed to skim each paper, make no comments on the papers, and record a score on each paper according to the rubric for that objective. To enhance reliability, the teams spent about 20 minutes reading the first few papers together, discussing how the rubric ought to be used. Then individuals scored papers on their own. After scoring each paper they placed their initials in the top corner and passed the paper on. Therefore all three faculty scored the same papers.

The experience was a generally cordial one. Faculty gained insights by seeing the products of students in courses outside their areas. There was a break after two hours where faculty had good conversation around a nice luncheon. They spent a total of three hours reading papers.

The Coordinator of Assessment calculated a mean score for each paper. Pre-test and later scores for a given objective were compared to document growth.

Closing the Loop

On July 5 the General Studies Curriculum Council met to discuss the results and suggest improvements to the assessment process and to the curriculum. Among suggestions for changes to the PLA process were:

- Better training and communication for faculty to make sure they understand the purpose and process of the PLA and are able to communicate it to students.
- Student self-scoring of the pre-test to reduce anxiety among students and enable them to understand the rubric being used to evaluate them. Faculty teams will still score selected pre-tests for assessment purposes.

Curricular improvements include:

- More attention to critical thinking in faculty development.
- Revision of the final course to include ethical thought.

In conclusion, we have found that the valuable information gained by assessing actual products of coursework has far outweighed the extra effort it took to set up the portfolio system. The total assessment plan has informed quality changes in the General Education curriculum, and has ultimately verified the validity of the degree. The Personal Learning Anthology has been a confidence builder for students as they see their own progress and a valuable time of faculty discussion when developing rubrics and scoring the exhibits. Portfolios continue to be a requirement for adult students, and will be annually assessed as part of continuous improvement at Indiana Wesleyan University.

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Table 1: APS GENERAL EDUCATION

Objective	World Changer Outcome	Assessment Criteria & Procedures	Assessment Results	Use of the Results
1. Demonstrate an understanding of a Christian worldview	1a- Basics of the Christian faith 3a- Commitment to truth 3c- Human worth 3d- Stewardship	**Pre/post Ethics Writing Sample:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in articulating a Christian worldview as indicated by a faculty-written scoring rubric.	**Ethics-BIL102 Writing Samples:** Mean scores on Christian world view improved 76.76% at mid-point.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
2. Apply ethical thought and action in both a professional and personal setting.	1a- Basics of the Christian faith 1d- Integration of knowledge 3g- Agents of change	**Pre/post Ethics Writing Sample:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in ethical thought as indicated by a faculty written scoring rubric.	**Ethics-ENG140 Opinion Writing Samples:** Mean scores on Ethics improved at 5.5% at mid-point.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
3. Exhibit values and skills necessary for lifelong learning	2e- Life-long learning	**Academic Profile:** Institutional scores will meet or exceed scores from a national sample of other comprehensive universities. **Personal Learning Anthology** (PLA) inclusions will exhibit values and skills necessary for lifelong learning.	**Academic Profile:** IWU scores are comparable to a national sample. Lowest performance in math skills. Due March, 2001	MAT110 and MAT103 strengthened. MAT 103 required for new ASGS degree.
4. Comprehend complex reading materials	1b- Liberal arts foundation	**Academic Profile:** College Reading scores will meet or exceed scores from a national sample of comprehensive universities.	**Academic Profile:** IWU scores are comparable to a national sample.	Assessment FY 2000-2001

5.Apply critical thinking skills concerning ideas and performance.	1b- Liberal arts foundation 2b- Critical thinking	**Academic Profile:** Critical thinking scores will meet or exceed scores from a national sample of comprehensive universities. **Pre/post Ethics Writing Sample:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in critical thinking as indicated by a faculty-written scoring rubric.	**Academic Profile:** IWU scores are comparable to a national sample. **Ethics-HST 180 Writing Samples:** Mean scores on critical thinking improved 8.25% at mid-point.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
6. Develop skill in problem solving and decision making.	1d- Integration of knowledge 2a- Creativity 3d- Stewardship	**Pre/post Ethics Writing Sample:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in problem solving and decision making as indicated by a faculty-written scoring rubric.	**Ethics-PHE 140 Writing Samples:** Mean scores on Problem Solving improved 23.25% at mid-point.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
7. Demonstrate effective written communication skills.	2c- Communication	**Essay Samples:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will have a score of 3 or more on each of 6 traits on a standardized writing rubric. **Academic Profile:** College writing scores will meet or exceed scores from a national sample of comprehensive universities.	Due March 2001 **Academic Profile:** IWU scores are comparable to a national sample.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
8. Demonstrate effective oral communication skills. 88	2c- Communication	**Pre/post Oral Presentation:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in oral communication skills as indicated by a faculty-written scoring rubric.	Due March 2001	Assessment FY 2000-2001 89

9. Exhibit the ability to find needed information.	1b- Liberal Arts 2f- Leadership	**Pre/post Writing Sample:** When a sample of 50 are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in information literacy as indicated by a faculty-written scoring rubric.	**Ethics-ECO205 Writing Samples:** Mean scores on Information Literacy improved 65.5% at mid-point.	Assessment FY 2000-2001
10. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively in teams.	3h- Selfishness 2a- Creativity 2f- Leadership 2g- Agents of change 3b- Inclusion	**Pre/post Group Process Assessment:** When a sample of 50 assessments are reviewed by faculty, 90% will meet or exceed the criteria of a 10% improvement in group process as indicated by a Group Processes Assessment in the middle and end of their program.	Due March 2001	Assessment FY 2000-2001

7/00 cbt

Personal Learning Anthology

A Portfolio showing my General Education Learning in the ASB Degree Program

Student Name_____ **Core Group**_____

Copies of the Personal Learning Anthologies will be reviewed for program assessment purposes.

Course #	Required PLA Exhibits	Ten Across Skill	Points Possible	Awarded
UNV111	Ethics Writing Sample and Score Sheet	Christian View, Ethical Thought, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Info Literacy	0-1	
ENG140	Essays: Experience Persuasive Opinion	Written Communication	0-1	
ENG141	Written Report and Oral Presentation Score Sheet	Written & Oral Communication	0-1	
PHE140	Individual Wellness Project	Lifelong Learning	0-1	
BIL102	Reflection Paper	Christian World View	0-1	
COM115	Faith Integration Paper	Christian World View	0-1	
MAT110	Business Math Project	Problem Solving	0-1	
HST180	Individual Research Paper	Reading Critical Thinking	0-1	
ECO205	Group Project	Team Building	0-1	
PSY155	Philosophical Perspective Group Process Assessment	Problem Solving Team Building	0-1	
	INTERIM CHECK	Subtotal	0-10	
ENG242	Final Critical Review	Critical Thinking Written Com.	0-1	
MUS180	Definition of Aesthetics Both Critiques	Lifelong Learning Critical Thinking	0-1	
PHL283	Analysis Paper Synthesis Pres. & Oral Presentation Score Sheet	Reading Oral Com.	0-1	
BIO203	Group Project with Group Process Assessment	Team Building	0-1	
BUS274	Ethics Writing Sample and Score Sheet	Christian View, Ethical Thought, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Info Literacy	0-1	
	FINAL CHECK	Subtotal	0-5	
TOTAL	PERSONAL LEARNING	ANTHOLOGY	SCORE	

This is to certify that _____ has received PLA evaluation of

(check one) ☐ Satisfactory (All exhibits completed to date) ☐ Unsatisfactory (Reported to Associate Dean)

Facilitator Signature_____ Date _____

A PARTNERSHIP IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL

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The University of New England (UNE) is a private entrepreneurial university located 50 miles north of the Maine-New Hampshire border. It has sustained enrollment growth every year for the past twenty years. The average age of our students has been in the mid-twenties prior to our investment into off campus and distance education programs. The University of New England realized it has limited capacity for program offerings in a traditional campus setting so it set out to expand offerings in the rapidly growing market of adult students. One such program is an undergraduate degree completion program in Organizational Behavior offered in a weekend format; another is a distance graduate program for teachers offered in a video and mail format. Recently the University began an advanced graduate certificate in education based solely on-line using the E-College platform.

Several years ago the University, a not-for-profit corporation formed a partnership with a for-profit corporation in Israel for the delivery of two of its programs: The Bachelor of Science in Nursing and the Bachelor of Science in Health Services Management. This initiative was built upon the faculty's experience and reputation in the health sciences. It represents UNE's first foray into international education, and it has been one with many opportunities and challenges.

Background

The University of New England has had degree programs in Nursing and Health Services Management since the early 80's and they have been offered on both of UNE's campuses, the ocean front campus in Biddeford and the Portland campus, called the Westbrook College Campus. The Department of Nursing offers a number of different degree programs, ranging from two year to graduate, while the Department of Performance Management offered only an undergraduate degree program. When the State of Israel passed a law in 1996 mandating that all of its 44,000 Registered Nurses have to complete baccalaureate degrees within a limited time period to retain their licenses, UNE was approached by a privately held corporation in Israel. This corporation saw an opportunity to capture an untapped market of students who needed a vehicle to gain a degree. The corporation already had some experience in other programs and decided to consider a partnership to deliver programs in nursing and health services management to nurses in Israel. While there are many government institutions of higher education in Israel as well as several dozen small ones specializing in religious and Hebrew studies, few are entrepreneurial in spirit and practice.

A second impetus for this joint venture was the large number of nurse immigrants from countries such as the former Soviet Union, whose skills and experiences were not acceptable for licensing and for baccalaureate and advanced degree designation in the State of Israel. Israel has had a standing policy of open immigration for any Jew from anywhere in the world. With the collapse of Communism in the USSR, the number of immigrants to Israel quickly approached one million persons in the last decade.

In 1996 representatives from the Departments of Nursing and Performance Management, along with administrators at UNE, met with representatives from Horizons Unlimited, an Israeli corporation already engaged in delivering degree programs from three other New England institutions (Northeastern University, Clark University and New England College) in the State of Israel. This meeting was the result of a chance encounter by one of the UNE administrators to Israel on an accreditation site visit sponsored by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Horizons Unlimited of Israel proposed that it serve as UNE's administrative agent in Israel to market programs and recruit students. As in the case of the other universities who partner with them, the organization also arranges for the delivery of the curriculum under the direction of the American University. In fact, the Israeli organization already offered courses at three locations (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa), and has a large administrative building in Tel Aviv that houses offices of registration and admission, academics, business and finance, and student services. This facility is located adjacent to the University of Tel Aviv making it convenient for faculty and students who may be participating with the two facilities.

In addition, the building holds a number of modern classrooms and computer laboratories, along with a limited library. In terms of duties and accountabilities, UNE responsibilities would include the development and implementation of the curriculum, and the oversight of the faculty and students. Admissions would be directed by UNE, but actually carried out by the partner using UNE criteria. Program administrators in Israel would recommend faculty members, but the University would have the final say in the hiring and retention of faculty. Of course the University would certify students for graduation and actually award the degrees. In other words, the University would provide the academic structure and guidance, and they would be the administrators of these programs.

UNE representatives felt that the guarantees of control over the programs, and the excellent experiences of the other New England institutions of higher education, made this a viable option. Once financial contracts were negotiated, curricula were finalized and implementation plans completed. There was some skepticism on campus regarding the University involvement with a for-profit venture as well as some concern that we really did not have the depth of experience and talent to support such a venture given our other needs. Nevertheless, the Faculty Senate, the administration, and the Board of Trustees put aside their concerns and voted to develop the program.

The Programs

The University of New England's reputation in health services had attracted the representatives of Horizons Unlimited to our programs, and they agreed with us that the combination of degrees in nursing and health services management would be an attractive mix of offerings for nurses considering completing their baccalaureate degrees. The programs had to be designed and implemented so as to meet the criteria that we had all developed collaboratively:

(1) They had to meet the needs of UNE's accrediting body and the needs of the programs' specialized accrediting bodies (e.g., National League of Nursing);
(2) They had to be acceptable to the Israel Council of Higher Education and the Israeli Ministry of Health;
(3) The programs had to have content very similar to programs delivered on our US campus;
(4) The curricula had to be deliverable within a one year time-frame (for full-time students); and,
(5) The programs had to be marketable to working adult nurses.

The Nursing program was implemented in October 1997, and the Health Services Management in October 1998. The program courses were parallel to those offered here, but the challenges involved adapting the courses, where necessary, for the differences in the cultures and the health systems.

One major difference between the U.S. and Israel (in career patterns) makes this program viable. In the U.S. nursing may be a route to career advancement into management. However, managers in U.S. health care may come from business and/or health care management or even liberal arts. In most cases managers of mid and upper management positions in Israel are nurses who come from hospital based educational programs; they certainly have clinical skills but very little education in management issues. Furthermore, in the U.S. nurses who want to stay in nursing pursue a B.S. in nursing followed by the M.S. The profession demands this and it is restrictive, albeit effective in controlling access to the profession of nursing. In Israel, the Ministry of Health officials in nursing (Deputy Minister of Health for Nursing) believe that both clinical nurses and managers who were practicing nurses are viable and suitable career paths for nurses. The Directors (CEOs) of hospitals are all physicians; this is result of law, practice, and philosophy.

The challenge of providing educational experiences that build upon the exposure to both health systems did involve considerable work, but did not prove difficult. For example, a course in health care finance is very different in the United States where there are multiple payers, from one in Israel where the government is the sole payer; however, a comparison of systems and their different evolutions is useful educationally. In addition, a nursing course in ethics examines quite different issues in Israel versus the U.S. This, in itself, opens up a wide variety of useful discussions.

The adapting of the program for differences in cultures, including values, learning styles, and educational preferences, proved much more challenging. First of all, the history of Israel has been based on the greatest good for the greatest number. Social responsibility is part of the founding culture. This concept permeates most aspects of Israeli life from childhood throughout life. Obviously part of this concept comes from the experience of the kibbutz community even though only a small percentage of the present day population resides in a kibbutz. (See Cozic.)

While the people of the United States pride themselves on individualism, Israel society focuses on the group. Two examples may illustrate the principle:

(1) Many of the students cannot understand how it is possible that a country as wealthy as the U.S., does not provide universal health care to every citizen, especially since the US spends more per capita than any other country in the world and

(2) In doing an assignment the students consulted the university librarian. She was amazed at the amount of sharing of efforts exhibited by the Israeli students. If one student found an interesting article or resource, the student would share it with all the other students. The librarian commented, "American students would tend to hide it, not share it."

Command of the English language has required major adaptations. While one third of the students are quite fluent in English including those born in the U.S., countries of the British Commonwealth, or other Anglophone countries, one third of the students had English as a second language and the final third had English as a second or even third language.

Most of the students were educated previously in a European type system in which rote memory, teacher lectures, note taking and regurgitation of the "correct" answers on a test were the norm. Trying to educate and teach the students in a lecture discussion with a great deal of self and group learning is not easy. In fact many of the students express it in terms of " you are paid to teach us; if we can teach ourselves, we do not need you." Asking students to answer questions in which multiple answers are possible and providing take-home tests that require an essay response is difficult for them to accept, let alone master.

Finally one problem the faculty has had and continues to have is one raised in the sharing issue. The faculty finds that students do in fact share a great deal, from information to notes to assigned papers and take-home examinations. Although the record concerning cheating by American students is quite pronounced, American faculty understand it genesis and how it plays itself out in and out of the classroom. Furthermore, adult students in the U.S. appear much more individualistic and protective of their work. Israeli students share so much in so many ways it is sometimes difficult to determine who really is responsible for the effort and who should get the credit. This problem is compounded by the fact the faculty encourages students to seek help with their writing and translation. Some of the students actually write their assignments in Hebrew and translate into English!

Target Audience

The programs were designed for the working adult nurses—individuals from approximately 23 years of age (after two years of military service and study for the nursing diploma) through sixty years of age (approximate retirement age). Ninety percent of the students are female. Students are able to complete the program in one year of study, attending full time, or two years if part-time. All students attend classes one day per week, with the hours varying by the load taken. (Full-time students attend classes for 12 hours on day, while part-time attend for six hours only.) Their employers give them the time off for professional development. (They also allow students six weeks off in the summer to attend classes in the United States.) As indicated earlier this is part of social responsibility. Most of the nurses work in government sponsored agencies although a few work in the private sector. Students complete their studies in three semesters, with the first two terms completed in Israel and the last, the summer term, completed in the United States. (Starting in 2001, all students may complete all studies in Israel.)

The students have an average of ten years experience as nurses, and approximately 30 percent are currently serving as managers. They are employed in a wide variety of sites, including schools, clinics, hospitals, and private practices, and come from all over the country. Although courses are offered in the cities of Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, it is not unusual for our students to travel over an hour for classes. Courses are completed in cohorts, with students developing strong ties with each other and having opportunities to learn about other jobs and employers in the field of health care in Israel.

Students place great demands on themselves to do well. In addition, we often find that students in courses work together, thus increasing the competition. In some cases, students are in class with their supervisors, which provides for interesting classroom and performance dynamics. Students also represent all segments of the society including deeply religious, secularists, and self-proclaimed atheists.

Students are required to speak English fluently and to demonstrate this by an acceptable grade on the TOEFL and by passing grades in three levels of English as a Second Language courses. In reality, students' competencies in English vary greatly and create challenges for instructors throughout the curriculum. Because the degree is from an American institution, Israeli students must read, write and speak English at a level comparative to students from foreign counties who attend the University in the United States.

The Faculty

The program uses doctorally qualified faculty as much as possible. In approximately 90 percent of the courses for the Health Services Management program, and approximately 60 percent of the courses for the Nursing Program, faculty members have terminal degrees. Israeli faculty who teach in the program provide a richness of qualifications and a diversity of experiences and interests. In fact many of the Israeli faculty have wide experience in international education and international professional experience. The United States and England are

the most prominent countries but also include such countries as Australia and South Africa.

As part of its commitment, UNE is required to teach one-third of the curriculum with full-time UNE faculty. This meant that approximately 16 credits in each program have to be offered by faculty from UNE. Part of this is accomplished during the summer, when the Nursing Department delivers 12 credits, and Health Services Management delivers nine credits. The remainder involves sending faculty to Israel to live and teach for extended periods of time.

At the beginning, the model used was for half-semester assignments in Israel, with courses shared with Israeli faculty. Although this seemed acceptable by design, courses lacked continuity, students were not satisfied with the educational experience, and grading was problematic. The delivery has since been changed to one of full semesters only. Therefore, we send full-time university faculty to live and teach in Israel (and to teach in three different cities), for fifteen weeks at a time. Last year, two faculty members went to Israel for each program and three will go this year. In addition, each program has hired a new full-time faculty member dedicated to this international program. This person will be in Israel for two or three semesters per year, teaching four sections of courses per semester. These full-timers will be supplemented by other faculty who will go for one semester only.

Delivery of the Program

The courses are delivered in two parts:

(1) Pre-professional curriculum (including English as a Second Language courses, introductions courses in such fields as psychology, sociology and economics, computer competency courses, etc.); and
(2) The professional curriculum.

Students must complete the pre-professional curriculum, which is taught both in Hebrew and English, depending upon the course, prior to enrolling in the actual program curriculum. The courses in this part of the program are not delivered by UNE faculty; rather, they are delivered by some full-time employees of our partner (particularly in the ESL area), and by other Israeli faculty. Our faculty members, those from UNE, teach during the professional curricula, when students are more accomplished in their language skills and further along in their study habits.

A typical faculty member will live in Tel Aviv, Israel, and teach in all three cities where we have campuses. The word campus here is an urban one housed largely in one large building close to the center of the city. Public transportation is used to get the faculty to classes. For example, on Mondays, a faculty member will take the train from Tel Aviv to Haifa, teach for three or six hours (depending upon the number of sections), and return by train. On Tuesdays, the faculty member takes the bus to Jerusalem and teaches. On Thursdays, the faculty member teaches two course sections in Tel Aviv, the largest campus, and

the home of the partner. The travel time ranges from 1.5 hours each way to 20 minutes.

The average class size is 30 students. Thus a faculty member teaching four course sections is teaching 200 students. This might be considered an acceptable load in the United States for undergraduate instruction. In Israel, language problems, cultural differences, and varieties in learning styles complicate it. Problems of communication, grading, building relationships in the classroom, and understanding and adapting to learning styles abound in such a climate. The consensus among the faculty members is that the students are enjoyable and the program is mission oriented but the assignment is one that demands a great deal of energy.

For the student, it can also be a problem. Sitting in a classroom where English is being spoken exclusively for three hours is extremely tiring and taxing. In some cases, students are taking two classes in a row taught in English. This has caused major problems for a number of our students, and our personal experiences show that it is a problem for a majority of students. They just cannot listen and learn for that long.

Summer courses have been taught at the University's Westbrook College Campus in Portland, Maine. Full-time, part-time and adjunct UNE faculty members have participated in the program. Prior to the beginning of the session, the Program Coordinator, an administrator, holds a half-day cultural training program in which faculty and staff are given training about Israeli culture. In addition, there is a half-day faculty meeting to discuss teaching and learning, and to provide faculty opportunities to discuss the courses and to learn from prior experiences with the students.

At this point, students are in each class for four hours and take three classes over the six weeks. The compression of the class hours, and the necessary time pressure, is hard on the students. In addition to being away from families for six weeks, including extremely small children and aging parents, students are stressed about the amount and levels of work required. For many of the students, this is the first time they have been away from family and friends for such an extensive stay.

Student-Faculty Relationships

The challenges for faculty are numerous and continuous. Each and every time a faculty member enters a classroom in Israel and/or interacts with a student the level of concentration is about fifty percent greater than that required for a typical American class or student interaction.

The Middle Eastern culture is surely a factor. The particular application in Israel society compounds the challenge. Shahar and Kurz have addressed some of these issues in their book *Border Crossings*. If perception is reality for most persons including faculty members and students, then perceptions are of particular significance in cross-cultural American/Israeli settings. The authors provide some insight based upon fifteen years of training workshops:

1. Israelis

See themselves as:	**Americans see them as:**
Informal	rude, disrespectful
Open and natural	blunt, stubborn
Hospitable	smothering
Assertive	arrogant
Casual about rules	inconsiderate, undisciplined

2. Americans

See themselves as:	**Israelis see them as:**
Polite	artificial
Friendly	superficial
Respectful of privacy	excessively formal
Organized	rigid, inflexible
Professional	arbitrarily differentiating
Trustworthy	naïve

This list is quite accurate and a reflection of culture and perception. For an American faculty to learn to understand and apply these perceptions is an engaging and enlightening experience.

For example, most everything the faculty member says that is not part of content expertise (and factual) is subject to questioning and negotiating by the Israeli student. This extends from the syllabus to the homework assignments to the length and type of written papers to the length of a mid class break. American faculty members are all experienced in having students question them about decisions concerning exams and assignments but in most other areas the American student is more passive. Not so the Israeli student. What is said is negotiable.

The second area worth mentioning here is that of classroom speed of delivery. Based upon the language capability of students, the American speaker of English must use a great many more words to explain a concept or principle. This is for three reasons:

1. The students who are not native English speakers are always translating. Some translate verbally with each other; others have translation machines.
2. The Hebrew language does not have the rich variety of words available in English so the instructor must try to convey meaning not by repeating the same words but using a variety of words and examples to convey meaning.
3. Periodically the instructor realizes that communication in direct English is inadequate and uses one of the Anglo bilingual speakers to convey the message in Hebrew.

Obviously these conditions mean that the classroom pace is much slower and more verbal whether it is the instructor speaking or students speaking.

A Brief Cost-Benefit Analysis

Every program must be analyzed from the perspective of cost and benefit to the institution that sponsors it. The program described here is a contract program. University tuition income is not derived from these students at the same rate as non-contract programs. The rate is a lower one since the partner markets and administrates the majority of the program in Israel. Nevertheless the University of New England also consumes administrative resources and time--- from department chairs, from faculty, from deans, from the Registrar, and others. One of the questions we continue to raise is that of cost-benefit. Does the program cover its direct and indirect cost? The answer may appear to be one that can be easily determined but it is not. The direct costs are easy to quantify - travel costs and faculty costs. The support services in both academics and student areas are more difficult. The program has improved since its initiation and less time is being used, as administrative systems become routine.

The intangible benefit is that of university stature and faculty growth. Faculty members have opportunities to teach in new locales, to develop new knowledge and interests, and to conduct research in a different environment. We also gain many internal benefits from international academic participation. Obviously we benefit from the public relations pieces that report on the program. For example a recent news article highlighted that the Israeli summer students spend upwards of four thousand dollars each in U.S. travel and purchases of items, mostly gifts. This is significant benefit to our economy that is highly dependent on tourist income. Furthermore, we have had additional contacts from other countries interested in pursuing partnerships. This is a case of one success begets new possibilities.

Conclusion

The university's international programs have been points of excitement and frustration, and will continue to be such. For a state such as Maine in which cultural diversity is limited and minorities are just that, the opportunity to enrich the University cannot be dismissed. Faculty have been enriched from their experiences with Israeli students both here and in Israel, and the Israeli students have become better managers and nurses from learning in our program where they have been taught by both American and Israeli faculty. Every day is a challenge and we have to constantly evaluate the costs and benefits to the university, always with an eye to the future.

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QUALITY LEARNING AND ADULT TRANSFORMATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

Education-versus- training, a debate that persists from both the traditional higher education sector and the corporate training sector. What differentiates higher education from training? According to Scott (1997) higher education is concerned with attaining intellectual and critical thinking skills as opposed to attaining job-specific skills, often referred to as career education. However, with new models of adult learning emerging, is it possible that the debate is outdated? The employee of today needs to possess those skills once considered the domain of education. If this is the case, then educators and trainers alike should begin to develop programs and curriculum that fosters transformational development in their adult learners.

This presentation paper suggests that the models of education and training are blending into a new model of adult learning theory, which is capable of fostering transformative development in adult learners in both the higher education and corporate training environment. The model proposed by Poledink (1997), referred to as "quality learning," will serve as the model to demonstrate how the education and training models can be blended. In addition, the "quality learning" model provides an opportunity for the implementation of the transformational learning model, thus enhancing the adult's transformational development. Exploration of the concept is through a summary discussion of the current trends in workforce skills, reviewing the concepts of education and training models, defining transformational learning, a discussion on quality learning, and will conclude with a brief discussion on implementing quality-learning to foster transformational development.

Trends in Workforce Skills

Advances in technology over the 20th century have been great: the industrial era has transformed into the information era, resulting in extended and re-defined demands on higher education institutions and corporations. This post-industrial era has engendered major developments that influenced the structure of corporations, adult learning, and higher education. These developments are:

- Demographic changes have re-oriented to adult society: more adults and minorities are returning to campuses.
- The global economy has changed from a service and labor-driven industrial base to a knowledge-based economy where human capital is the corporation's primary asset.
- Technological advances require a constant need to upgrade skills.
- Corporate structure has changed from a pyramid hierarchy to the linear learning organization model where all employees become responsible for the organizational success. (Eurich, 1985; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Wirth, 1997)

These developments have resulted in corporations recruiting employees capable of managing themselves, people, and tasks, and who possess strong communication skills. The employee of today must be able to institute innovation and understand the concept of lifelong learning (Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998; Oblinger & Verille, 1998). Additionally, the corporate employer of today strives for a workforce of employees with the expertise and competence to effectively manipulate technology, solve complex problems, and clearly communicate with diverse populations on a global scale (Peak, 1997).

Corporations providing education programs to their employees are on the rise. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, of those adults surveyed in 1991, 65% of adults who took courses did so to improve or advance their careers. Business and industry provided 35% of the education for those adults surveyed. In addition, there has been a surge in corporate universities; in 1988 there were 400 corporate universities and by 1999 there were over 1,600Of those 1,600 corporate universities, 50% grant degrees, some in partnership with higher education institutions (Meister, 1998).

Adult learning theory suggests that adults partake in education for personal advancement. Often the education and training process is directly related to career progression (Knowles, 1990). This model is changing as the workplace itself changes. These changes have implications for adult learning and higher education in general. Gardner (1996) describes the workplace as a fluid and dynamic environment in today's global economy. Gardner suggests four trends that influence changes in the workplace: a restructured workplace, technology, values, and fragmentation. The workplace evolved from a pyramidal hierarchy where a few managers oversee the overall success of the company to a linear model where all employees contribute to success through teams and job cross training. The restructured workplace places a premium on education: the new economy is linked to education and learning. The focus is on "high quality and service, demand for variety, customization to fit individuals, convenience, and speed" (Gardner, 1996, p. 42).

The economy is now driven by knowledge, which is driven by technology. The rapid rate of new technology developments has often outpaced application. In addition, technology provides corporations with links to the global economy, resulting in instantaneous feedback, the elimination of routine jobs and the creation of new interactive jobs, and changes in societal values (Gardner, 1996). Learning has become an interactive process where the learner's experiences are significantly changed: the values of society change as a result. Fragmentation of roles occurs because work is no longer the primary source of individual identity. Gardner (1996) states that higher education has not kept up with changes: "Universities have not readily adapted or restructured their organizations to meet the needs of their consumers" (p. 44). Gardner challenges higher education to look at basic issues of workforce needs and to help educate an employable workforce.

According to a U.S. Department of Labor SCANS report in Evers et al. (1998), employers expect today's workforce to possess the following skills and abilities: the ability to acquire and utilize information, identify and organize resources, work with others, interpret information, and understand complex interrelationships (Mezirow, 1997). Additional skills required by the workforce of today include critical thinking,

effective communication, analytical skills, a paradigm shift from providing answers to deciding which questions to ask, and an understanding of the moral and ethical issues in decision making (Lynton, 1984; Lynton & Elman, 1987). New demands exist in the workplace and fundamental changes occur in "the nature of knowledge" (Evers et al., 1998; Lynton & Elman, 1987; Meister, 1994; Sheckley et al., 1993). According to Meister (1998), these changes have been brought about by five factors:

- Corporate organizational structures are becoming flat and flexible
- The economy is shifting to a knowledge-based economy
- Information is increasing at rapid rates requiring constant upgrading of skills
- A new concept of employability has replaced long term employment with one employer
- The global market place continues to expand

Corporate America is addressing these factors through the corporate universities and corporate higher education, which are extensions of the new organizational structures known as learning organizations.

Tobin (1998) suggests that a knowledge-enabled organization provides insight to the company, its customers, and the entire company business process: in other words, it fosters systems thinking. Successful learning organizations understand that the collective knowledge of employees can be a competitive advantage: every employee meets individual and company goals while providing opportunities and access to knowledge. Creating learning organizations requires a new way of thinking about learning. An adult model of learning requires the learner (and corporation) to access, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information (Brookfield,1996; Cross, 1981; Evers et al, 1998; Langenbach, 1993; Merriam & Brockett, 1997; Merriam & Cafferella, 1999; Mezirow, 1997).

Tobin (1997) also suggests that benefits to companies and employees derive from corporate higher education. The trend in the corporate sector to develop a knowledge-and-skills-based organization to seek a competitive edge results in more education at all levels. In addition, "training" is offered at a college level, often with college credit awarded. The training department is now an integral part of a company's success, no longer on the fringe (Eurich, 1985; Meister, 1998).

Education Model

What differentiates higher education from training? According to Scott (1997) higher education is concerned with attaining intellectual and critical thinking skills as opposed to attaining job-specific skills, often referred to as career education. Brookfield (1986) summarizes the debate by stating; "The point is that education is centrally concerned with the development of a critically aware frame of mind, not with the uncritical assimilation of previously defined skills or bodies of knowledge" (p. 17). Brookfield (1986) suggests that training is often defined by "organizational priorities" rather than by benefits an individual gains through education. Indeed, as discussed earlier, the criteria for establishing corporate training is entwined in the corporate mission of enhancing an employee's job performance in a global economy. Although

higher education institutions differ in mission and curriculum models, the overall role of higher education according to Voeks (1970) is to:

> Develop deeper comprehension of this world... and an eagerness to go on learning... increase the ability to see interrelationships of all kinds and make new, more meaningful integration's... build wider, deeper interests and develop the habit of continually extending interests... develop an increasing appreciation and love for the arts... develop a deeper compassion and understanding of all other people and individual differences... [and] learn new skills in thinking...(pp. 7-28)

The purpose of education and the approach to learning suggested by Voeks does not conform to the old corporate training model.

Historically adult learning theory, as suggested by Knowles (1990) the "father of adult education," is defined by the term "andragogy" which is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 54). The philosophical differences between pedagogy and andragogy and their applications in an educational setting are extensive. The pedagogy model, as it was traditionally thought of, comprises two basic assumptions about learning: the teacher identifies the need to learn, not the learner; and the learner self-concept is one of dependency.

Andragogy, as defined by Knowles (1995), comprises six basic assumptions concerning learning:

- Adults want to know why they are learning
- Self-concept and self-responsibility are their own decision
- The role of experience in the learner's life can become a critical aspect of learning
- Willingness to learn comes from real life situations
- Adults will take on a learning task if it will advance them in some way
- Motivation for learning is internally driven

Knowles (1990) recalls Lindeman's list of assumptions concerning adult learning. Lindeman added the concept that individual differences increase with age. Together these basic assumptions form the foundation of the majority of adult models of learning. Knowles (1990) pointed out the importance of life experience in adult models. Indeed, many adult models include experiential learning as a key component. Dewey (1938) suggested that learning of all types could come from life experiences, but for learning to occur, including mis-education, two principles are necessary: continuity and interaction. Dewey states that the learner's experience brings something from the past that is modified for future experiences. Additionally, the experience depends on the environment where it occurred. Kolb (1994) expanded on Dewey's theory and proposed that four abilities are required for learning to take place: the disposition to undergo new concrete experiences, the ability to observe and reflect on the new experience, the ability to analyze the experience, and the ability to make decisions and solve problems for a new approach to the experience. The concept of experiential learning is embedded in most training programs and is often a motivation for adults to complete

education and training programs, because the learning can be evaluated and applied immediately (Knowles, 1990; Wlodkowski, 1993).

Training Model

Conversely, the traditional training model is conducted in a specific location to upgrade technical skills taught by consultants through a model of "learning by listening" (Meister, 1998). In addition, training was for individuals and usually a one-time event, the overall goal was to provide the employee with an inventory set of skills to increase job performance (Meister, 1998).

The new model of training is commonly associated with learning organizations. In many corporations and industries the training division has been renamed the corporate university. In the new model, companies strive to be proactive by creating an environment that encourages learning-how-to-learn (Buffamanti, 1997). Buffamanti (1997) explains the model as "Training - as well as every other business operation - focuses increasingly on identifying, cultivating, and managing all the aspects of developing relationships that continually enhance the firm's competitive advantage" (p. 61). The education process surrounds all aspects of a "product." The result is the best product, that is, training across the entire system for employees, customers, buyers, and other users (Buffamanti, 1997). The corporate higher education curriculum focuses on seven core competencies:

- Learning to learn
- Communication and collaboration
- Creative thinking and problem solving
- Technology literacy
- Global business literacy
- Leadership development
- Career self-management (Buffamanti, 1997, p. 13)

These competencies closely parallel the needs identified for today's workforce suggested by Eurich (1985), Sheckley et al., (1993), and Tobin (1997) and those competencies suggested by Voeks.

Transformational Development

Mezirow (1997) defines transformative learning as "...the process of effecting change in a frame of reference" (p.5). He states further that the responsibility of facilitating transformative learning and assisting learners to reach their objective falls upon the educator. Most educators would agree with Mezirow's concepts and strive towards moving learners towards a frame of reference, that as Mezirow (1997) describes is, "...more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience " (p. 8). Higher education faculty and corporate trainers alike have a common goal of expanding the learner's knowledge base and foster their ability to be autonomous and creative problem solvers.

The transformation of individual frames of reference entails shifting the learner's habits in thinking, orientation to their environment, personal assumptions, and emotional response to the environmental situations (Mezirow, 1997). Additionally, learners must

become problem solvers and understand their ability to manipulate and control their environment. Mezirow (1997) suggest that learners can accomplish this through discourse with others. Discourse provides the learner with an opportunity to experience challenges to their own frames of reference through argument, examination of alternatives, and consideration of other individual's point of view. The learner begins to evaluate his or her own frame of reference through others: the learner becomes aware and begins to transform ideas, points of view, and perceptions of the environment.

As suggested earlier, employers today are seeking workers with advanced abilities in critical thinking, problem solving ability, communication skills, and the capability to be self-directed lifelong learners. However, often the goal for obtaining an education is more practical: promotion, certification, or career change. For transformational learning to take place, the facilitator needs to create a learning environment that will allow the adult learner the freedom to practice critical and reflective thinking. According to Mezirow (1997) the learning environment should provide an opportunity for extensive discourse, information that is free from coercion and is incorporated by the learner's own frame of reference, an active process, and be an environment that is open to a variety of perspectives. The implementation of the transformational model parallels the traditional adult model in that it is learner-centered, values the participation and interaction of learners, utilizes group activities for problem solving, draws from the learner's life experiences, and relies on active modes of inquiry such as projects, case studies, simulations, and life histories. The transformational model should foster self-directed learning, thus lifelong learning, enabling the learner to reflect on their frames of reference.

Blended Model

Poledink (1997) asserts that the education-versus-training debate is outdated because learning in the new learning organizations (high-performance organizations) has changed the playing field of education. He further suggests that the core of both models will not suffice in today's high performance environment. Poledink (1997) poses an alternative theory of learning that combines adult education and training theories into a model called "quality learning." Poledink (1997) describes this theory as "the formation of insight, perspective, competency, and judgment that occurs through the organization's provision and support of learning opportunities and the employee's active participation in acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 114). Quality learning emphasizes basic adult learner characteristics by combining theory and practice, concrete and abstract concepts, academic and applied methodology, and immediate and long-range goals.

Quality learning as a model has three domains: learning goals, learning content, and learning context. The overall learning goals need to incorporate the learner's goals for personal and professional growth. The learning content should ensure that foundation skills (reading, writing, oral communication, math, and learning to learn) are achieved. Other content should cross personal and professional educational needs and recognize knowledge gained from experience. The learning context should be assessed on a regular basis through a quality feedback process. Considerations for the context of the educational environment include the learner variables, what the learner brings with them to the learning environment, the cultural and political environment, instructional design,

and the facilitators. Poledink (1998) suggests that each of these domains combines to create an environment of quality learning, which leads to self-directed learning.

Implementation

As facilitators of adult programming it becomes a challenge to meet the needs of the learner, the institution or corporation, and those to whom we are accountable. The responsibility for ensuring that learners leave an educational process "transformed" is an intimidating task indeed. Grabove (1997) describes the experience by stating, "...facilitating and engaging in the process of transformative learning require a great deal of effort, courage, and authenticity on the part of both the educator and the learner, because there is considerable risk and the effort may or may not result in reward" (p. 90). However, if facilitators plan accordingly and integrate the concepts of transformative learning, the potential for learner development increases.

Quality learning emphasizes basic adult learner characteristics by combining theory and practice, concrete and abstract concepts, academic and applied methodology, and immediate and long-range goals. Combining the concepts of quality learning with transformational learning theory to develop curriculum provides faculty and trainers a model that ensures both theory and practice are incorporated into the learning environment.

Instructional design of courses for either the college classroom or training environment can easily incorporate the transformational model. Group activities during "class" time foster interaction and challenge to individual thinking. In distance learning environments, live discussion groups are vital. Relating the new information to learner experience and context provide the learner with new insight into their perception of their environment. Simulations and case studies provide challenge in solving complex problems and often result in a variety of solutions. Role-playing is an effective method for learners to try on new ideas or concepts with which they disagree. While the activities encourage and challenge the learner, outside assignments should encourage the processing of information and reflection on individual frames of reference.

Conclusion

This presentation paper suggests that the models of education and training are blending into a new model of adult learning theory that is capable of fostering transformative development in adult learners in both the higher education and corporate training environment. With the advances in technology over the 20th century, the industrial era has transformed into the information era, resulting in extended and re-defined demands on higher education institutions and corporations. The ultimate result is that higher education and corporate trainers have created a model of adult education that reflects aspects of the traditional educational and training model. Indeed there is common ground between education (theory) and training (application) learning models. The new model lends itself to the successful adaptation of transformational learning as the overall framework to encourage growth for adult learners in the professional and personal realms of their lives.

As practitioners of adult education, our responsibility for transformational learning extends beyond our interaction with learners. Our responsibility extends to the education and training of staff, faculty, and other administrators. Further, to advance

the field and understanding of adult learning models, it is our responsibility to conduct research in our real world environments. From the research will come overall improved educational environments for classrooms in higher education and training settings.

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TRANSFERABILITY OF CURRICULUM LEARNING OUTCOMES FROM AN ADULT BACCALAUREATE DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM BY ALUMNI LEADERS TO THEIR WORKPLACE SETTING

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Background

Malcolm Knowles believed that adults learn in order to perform tasks, solve problems, or increase life satisfaction (Knowles and Associates 1984). A major implication of Knowles' pioneering writing on andragogy is that curriculum for adults should be oriented around their life situations and present opportunities for adults to problem-solve (Lowe 1975; as cited by Shaw 1982).

Malcolm Knowles' (1980, 1989) six assumptions of andragogy represent his core ideas about andragogy. These six assumptions are:

(1) Adults both desire and enact a tendency toward self-directedness as they mature, though they may be dependent in some situations.

(2) Adults' experiences are a rich resource for learning.

(3) Adults are aware of specific learning needs generated by real life tasks or problems.

(4) Adults wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances.

(5) Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.

(6) The most potent motivators motivating adults to perform in the workplace are intrinsic motivators such as desire for higher self esteem, quality of life, and job satisfaction.

Due to Malcolm Knowles' pioneering work, andragogical approaches have been implemented throughout the field of education (Davenport and Davenport 1985). However, there has also been considerable debate by researchers about many aspects of Knowles' six assumptions of andragogy. The literature indicates that many researchers believe more research is needed on Knowles' bedrock theoretical assumptions to validate andragogy as an accepted theory of adult learning (Davenport and Davenport 1985; Jarvis 1984; Stickey-Taylor and Sasse 1990; Beder and Carrea 1988).

Knowles fourth assumption of andragogy is that adults wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances. In reference to this fourth assumption, the researcher Brookfield (1986) takes issue with Knowles and believes Knowles may underestimate the large amount of learning adults undergo simply for the joy and fulfillment that learning itself brings to adults. However, other researchers believe adults learn primarily because they want to use the knowledge they

gain in other settings, such as the workplace (Aslanian and Brickell 1988).

Do adults learn primarily because they want to use knowledge they gain in other settings? To answer this question, research was conducted by the author as a way to test Knowles' fourth assumption of andragogy, which holds that adults wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances. This research directly tested Knowles' fourth assumption in a descriptive dissertation study: are alumni working in leadership positions actually applying leadership-related cognitively-based learning outcomes acquired in adult baccalaureate degree completion (ABDC) programs to their workplace setting and if so, to what degree of effectiveness?

Since the 1980s, educators have been placing more emphasis on the development and implementation of learning outcomes in educational design (Cage 1991; Jessup 1991; Semrow et al. 1992; Fitzpatrick 1995; Stronks 1991). Organizations, such as the Unit for the Development of Continuing Education (UDACE), recommend inclusion of "personal outcomes" for college graduates, such as interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, critical thinking, and processing skills which are transferable to a wide range of personal and work settings (Allan 1996).

During the mid 1980s, a new movement in higher education began towards providing students with 'transferable skills' that are applicable in employment settings (Stephenson 1992). Organizations, such as the College Outcomes Measurement Program (COMP), also claim college graduates need to obtain more skills in areas such as communication and learning to function effectively within employment settings (Eggins 1992).

Other researchers, such as Dearing (1997) and organizations, such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) also recommend inclusion of learning outcomes for students in the skill area of communication, numeracy, information technology, working with others, and learning how to learn. Related to this new movement in higher education, many researchers have also attempted to define in more operational terms how and when skill transfer by a student has actually taken place (Oates 1992).

Previously, higher education has placed less emphasis on the development of transferable skills because of an emphasis on cognitive learning. However, the literature indicates various stakeholders are calling for more emphasis by higher education on inclusion of transferable skills training that are directly applicable to the students workplace setting (Drew 1998; Evers, Rush, and Berdrow 1999).

The need to provide college students with more transferable workplace skills is being driven by a growing realization by both employers and students that college graduates often lack needed practical job skills. Some of these practical job skills include working effectively in group settings and adapting successfully to the culture of the corporation (Whitson 1998).

The Management and Organization Development (MOD) program is a management curriculum designed specifically for working adults. This program, in operation since 1989, is currently being offered at nineteen U.S. colleges. The author works as a faculty member in the MOD program offered by Fresno Pacific University (FPU), located in Fresno, California.

As designed, the MOD curriculum is heavily structured around simulations, case studies, small and large group exercises, and readings. As part of the program,

students reflect on their previous work and life experiences and link that experience with theories learned in the program. Students are then asked to apply this integrated learning using problem-solving techniques.

Knowles believed that the workplace setting is a key arena for application of knowledge (Knowles 1981). Since its inception in 1991, the MOD program at FPU, which was the focus of this study, has produced hundreds of adult graduates who now work in leadership positions. However, little research had been conducted to determine if cognitive knowledge or skills taught within the program are applied by graduates in their workplace setting. This study was designed to contribute directly to this research area.

Over the last twenty years there has been tremendous growth in Adult Baccalaureate Degree Completion (ABDC) programs in the United States (CAEL/ACE 1993). In 1983, only 100 adult degree programs could be identified by the American Council of Education (ACE). By 1993, over 284 programs were identified, nearly a three-fold increase in less than a decade (CAEL/ACE 1993). By 1993, over 600 institutions of higher learning have reported implementation of some form of adult program (CAEL/ACE 1993).

Growing numbers of adults are returning to college to learn and acquire occupational skills needed to advance in their work careers (Aslanian and Brickell 1988; Kay 1982). However, the rapid growth of ABDC programs has created some significant problematic issues for the field of adult education. This rapid growth has led to somewhat negative perceptions that the overall quality of adult degree completion programs is not at the same level as traditional undergraduate programs (Sherlock 1997; Balzer 1996).

Key principles related to effective practice for degree completion programs have been developed by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), American Council of Education (ACE), and the Institute of Professional Development (IPD), recognize the importance of evaluating learning outcomes in adult degree completion programs. A CAEL/ACE paper states that inappropriate assessment of learning outcomes is one reason for the somewhat negative perceptions about overall lack of quality of ABDC programs (CAEL/ACE 1993).

Despite recommendations by organizations such as ACE, CAEL, and IPD, there has been little research conducted in the area of evaluation of learning outcomes from adult degree completion programs (Sherlock 1997). This research is needed as one method to determine if ABDC programs are actually delivering high quality learning to their adult students. Herd (1998) also recommends in her recent dissertation study that further research needs to be conducted. To respond to the issues brought by CAEL/ACE, this current study attempted to provide more research knowledge about the application of learning outcomes in ABDC programs.

Purpose and Methodology of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to document the perception of FPU MOD program alumni who work as leaders concerning the frequency of their application of twenty-seven leadership learning outcomes to their workplace setting.

To accomplish the objectives of this descriptive study, the following four research questions were key to this research:

1. To what degree of frequency of application were leadership learning outcomes in Module Two, *Organizations and Environments,* being applied by MOD alumni to their workplace setting?

2. To what degree of frequency of application were leadership learning outcomes in Module Three, *Group and Organizational Behavior,* being applied by MOD alumni to their workplace setting?

3. To what degree of frequency of application were leadership learning outcomes in Module Seven, *Human Resources Administration,* being applied by MOD alumni to their workplace setting?

4. To what degree of frequency of application were leadership learning outcomes in Module Eight, *Principles of Management and Supervision,* being applied by MOD alumni to their workplace setting?

To carry out the methodology of this descriptive research, the researcher developed a survey instrument identifying twenty-seven leadership outcomes for Modules Two, Three, Seven, and Eight. A four-point Likert scale was selected which employed descriptors to describe the scale of application for each of the twenty-seven leadership outcomes. The scale included "never applied" (indicating a score of 1), "rarely applied" (indicating a score of 2), "occasionally applied" (indicating a score of 3), and "frequently applied" (indicating a score of 4).

The researcher then identified 185 alumni of the MOD program at FPU who, since graduation, have worked one or more years as a leader, manager, or supervisor, overseeing the work activities of one or more subordinates in a work environment. These 185 alumni leaders constituted the sample for this survey. They makeup 34.4 percent of the total group of 538 alumni who graduated from the program during the years 1991 to 1997.

In 1999, a telephone survey to all 538 alumni was completed. This yielded a total of 185 possible respondents. Data were collected on this sample through the use of a self-developed instrument containing twenty-seven questions related to the four research questions addressed in this study.

Over a period of two months, a total of three mailings resulted in a response rate of 83.7 percent which helped obtain research validity. Descriptive data were calculated for each of the twenty-seven questions of the questionnaire, including number of respondents, standard deviation, standard error, confidence level, and the mean score. Also, percentage and frequency responses were compiled for each of the twenty-seven items on the survey. Open-ended written responses were summarized in a table format for each of the four modules studied. The questionnaire responses were coded for statistical analysis and tabulated using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS/PC).

Major Findings

The following major findings were reported as they related to the four research questions of this descriptive study.

Findings for Module Two, Organizations and Environments Module

Based on mean responses of the sample of 185 alumni leaders from the MOD program at FPU to all five learning outcomes in this module, one learning outcome, *How Key Elements of Culture Impact Organizations*, was found to be "frequently applied" to the respondents' workplace setting. Based on mean response to the sample, the remaining four learning outcomes were found to be "occasionally applied" to the respondents' workplace setting.

In terms of generalizability to the total population of alumni leaders from all 19 U.S. colleges who are currently offering the MOD program, examination and comparison of confidence intervals for all five learning outcomes indicates that, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, all five learning outcomes for this module were found to be "occasionally applied" or "frequently applied" in their previous or current work environment In summarizing key written responses to the open-ended question of section one of the survey, almost half of the respondents (48.9 percent), felt that learning outcomes in Module Two have been "effectively applied" in their work setting, and have been helpful to them.

Findings for Module Three, Group and Organizational Behavior Module

Based on mean responses of the sample of 185 alumni leaders from the MOD program at Fresno Pacific University to the eight learning outcomes in this module, two learning outcomes, *Effective Leadership Requires Being Situational*, and *Interpersonal Communication* were found to be "frequently applied" to the respondents previous or current workplace setting. The six remaining learning outcomes, were found to be "occasionally applied."

It was found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, that all eight leadership outcomes for Module Three were being either "occasionally applied" or "frequently applied" by the total population of ABDC alumni in leadership positions in their previous or current work setting.

In summarizing written responses to the open-ended question for section two of the survey, exactly half of the respondents (50.0 percent) felt that learning outcomes in Module Three are applied often in their work setting and are key skills directly related to their particular leadership style.

Findings for Module Seven, Human Resources Administration Module

Based on mean responses to the sample of 185 alumni leaders from the MOD program at Fresno Pacific University, all six learning outcomes in this module rated as being "occasionally applied" in the respondents' previous or current workplace setting. In terms of generalizability to the total population of alumni leaders from all nineteen colleges, one of the six leadership learning outcomes for Module Seven, *Writing a Job Description Capable of Serving as an Effective Guide for Recruitment of Employees*, was "occasionally applied" or "rarely applied" by alumni in leadership positions in their previous or current workplace setting. The remaining five leadership learning outcomes

were found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, to have been "occasionally applied" by alumni in leadership positions in their previous or current workplace setting.

In summarizing key written responses to the open-ended question for section three of the survey, only seven (21.2 percent) respondents felt that learning outcomes in this module have been used in their work setting since they have been in a leadership/supervisory role. A similar number of seven (21.2 percent) respondents provided written responses indicating these learning outcomes in Module Seven were not used because they were not related to their job role, their work organization was too small, or human resource functions were already being handled by their work organization.

Findings for Module Eight, Principles of Management and Supervision Module

Based on mean responses of the sample of 185 alumni leaders from the MOD program at Fresno Pacific University, all eight learning outcomes were found to be "occasionally applied" to the respondents' workplace setting. In terms of generalizability of results to the total population of alumni leaders from all nineteen colleges, one learning outcome, *Understanding Trends Toward Greater Employee Participation through Participatory Management*, was found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, as being "frequently applied" or "occasionally applied" to the alumni population's previous or current workplace setting.

One learning outcome, *Demonstration of the Knowledge of the Historical Development of Motivational Theory*, was found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, as being "occasionally applied" or "rarely applied" to the alumni population's previous or current workplace setting. The remaining six learning outcomes of this module were found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence, as being "occasionally applied" to the alumni population's previous or current workplace setting.

In summarizing key written responses to the open-ended question of section four of the survey, ten (43.5 percent) respondents felt that learning outcomes in Module Eight have been applied in their work setting and have helped them become better leaders.

Conclusions

Based on the mean sample response of 185 alumni leaders from Fresno Pacific University, there were three of the 27 learning outcomes in this study found to be "frequently applied." The remaining 24 of the 27 learning outcomes found to be "occasionally applied" in the alumni leader's previous or current work environment. None of the 27 learning outcomes were found to be "rarely applied" or "never applied" in the alumni leader's previous or current work environment.

One of Malcolm Knowles' major assumptions of andragogy is that adults wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances (1980). In this study, all twenty-seven of the cognitively oriented key leadership learning outcomes of this study were found, with a 95 percent degree of confidence to be either "frequently applied," "occasionally applied," or "rarely applied" by alumni leaders to their workplace setting. However, the key word here is "applied." With all twenty-seven (100.0 percent) learning outcomes, alumni have taken cognitive leadership learning provided by the

MOD program and have transferred or applied it with varying degrees of frequency into their workplace setting.

The results of this study support this key assumption by Knowles, one of six major assumptions upon which the theory of andragogy stands. These research findings also confirm work by Knowles and Associates (1984), that found that adults learn to perform tasks, solve problems, or live in more satisfying ways.

The author believes the results of this research indicate that alumni have taken cognitive leadership knowledge provided by the MOD program and have used it to perform leadership tasks or solve leadership-oriented problems in their workplace setting. These findings also confirm research by Aslanian & Brickell (19), indicating that adults want to use knowledge in the workplace, and tends to refute research by Brookfield (1984), whose research indicates that adults learn simply because of the joy and fulfillment of it.

Implications and Recommendations

It is recommended that both Module Seven, the Human Resources Administration Module and Module Eight, Principles of Management and Supervision, be significantly revised to eliminate certain learning outcomes that are currently part of the curriculum. It is also recommend that MOD directors consider large-scale revisions to all nine modules of the program curriculum to include more transferable leadership skills training for students.

Currently, the FPU MOD program incorporates a heavy reliance on cognitive knowledge versus transferable skills. However, the author believes transferable skills learning would be applied by alumni in their workplace settings more than cognitively based learning outcomes. If true, transferable skills learning could actually provide more career benefit to future MOD alumni. Perhaps the time has come throughout the field of education to reduce a traditional emphasis on cognitive learning in curriculum design. More emphasis on transferable skills training in curriculum design for future college graduates should also be considered.

It is recommended that more leadership-oriented transferable skills training in the areas of simulations, role-plays, and videotaping arrangements be both created and included within the MOD program (Hall 1994). This kind of learning environment will allow students to practice their performance as future leaders. This will help alumni leaders be better prepared to manage people and tasks, adapt to change, and be more of a risk-taker (Evers Rush and Berdrow 1999).

It is also recommended that MOD program directors include more transferable skills training in the area of helping students "learn how to learn." Based on the literature, the author recommends inclusion into the MOD program learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge, comprehension, the ability to apply knowledge in different situations, and the processing skills acquired through the use and application of knowledge (Allan 1996). This will help future MOD students to improve their ability to learn more quickly and efficiently and will increase their future value to work organizations.

It is also recommended that a concentrated transferable skill emphasis in the area of information technology be implemented into the MOD program. Immediate consideration should be given to revising the MOD program so that areas of the

curriculum program can be offered to students via the Internet in time-free, space-free, environments.

Another of Malcolm Knowles' (1989) main assumptions of andragogy is that adults "need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it" (83). Knowles felt that adults invest tremendous energy to examine benefits they will gain from new learning or the negative consequences of not learning it before attempting to learn something on their own. Because of this, Knowles felt that the first job of the teacher of adults is to help learners become aware of the "need to know." Based on Knowles' assumption, the author recommends that when class begins, more emphasis be given by the MOD facilitator in explaining to students the benefits of the curriculum.

Many researchers in the field of adult learning claim that adults will learn more if the adult is allowed more freedom to select the content and process of learning, based on individual interest and needs (Lowe 1975; as cited by Shaw 1982). The FPU MOD program is a lock-step curriculum-based program that currently allows for little individuality in offering knowledge specifically tailored to each student's workplace learning needs. As a way of expanding learning outside of the traditional classroom setting, Malcolm Knowles suggests individualized learning plans for students (Knowles and Associates 1984). It is suggested that MOD program directors consider some utilization of individualized learning plans for their adult students.

The individualized learning plan is a signed contract of agreements between the adult learner, workplace supervisor, and educational instructor as a way to agree on learning objectives and learning outcomes the student would reach (Knowles and Associates 1984). The author recommends that MOD directors consider adding a module to the program built around the concept of creating a individualized learning contract between each MOD student, the student's workplace supervisor, and MOD facilitator. This would assist MOD students to reach learning outcomes specifically tailored on an individual basis to meet their actual workplace needs.

This "learning contract" approach would allow the student input in terms of creating learning outcomes that he/she hopes to achieve. The student will have a greater motivation to actually learn from the experience provided by the learning contract.

Implementation of individualized learning plans allows students the freedom to design their own learning. The "learning contract" approach allows the student to apply learning immediately in their workplace setting.

The literature suggests that non-traditional degree completion programs are often viewed as offering a lower-quality educational experience as compared to the traditional undergraduate program (ACE 1990). Sherlock's (1997) suggests that very little attention is being given by Adult Degree Completion Program (AADCP) administrators to determine what their respective students learned while completing these type of programs.

This lack of attention by degree completion administrators may be one factor leading to the somewhat negative perception many in education have about degree completion programs. It is recommended that MOD program directors conduct more independent research with their respective alumni to determine what other learning outcomes from this program are being applied in the workplace by alumni. The results

of this research should be communicated widely throughout the field of higher education.

It is recommended that MOD program directors continue to explore ways to communicate results of research conducted with their respective alumni to relevant educational stakeholder groups within their own academic setting. The literature indicates many of these educational stakeholder groups may currently hold somewhat negative perceptions about the quality of education offered by degree completion programs (Sherlock 1997). Communication of more alumni research about the MOD program may help reduce some of these negative perceptions. Finally, more empirical research needs to be conducted on Malcolm Knowles' six assumptions of andragogy. This research will assist to further operationalize the field of andragogy as a distinct theory of adult learning.

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USING COMPREHENSIVE PORTFOLIOS TO ENCOURAGE SELF-MANAGED LEARNING AND ASSESS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

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Introduction

Since the early 90's, faculty and administrators at Capital University have worked to apply the *Principles of Good Practice* (1990) to their Adult Degree Program (ADP). Early on, faculty concentrated on defining the program mission and goals for ADP learners. The goals were abstract -- that learners become self-managed, lifelong, collaborative, self-aware, experiential learners -- but also tied to specific behavioral assessment criteria (Appendix 1). Setting such goals was an important step in the evolution of the ADP, but implementing these goals and finding ways to measure learner outcomes presented challenges. As a program that primarily delivered a prescribed arts and sciences curriculum, the ADP had limited influence on the personal development of its students. Although content-based learning outcomes and assessment have always been part of individual Arts and Science courses, there had not been a way to direct ADP learners toward programmatic goals or any formal means of measuring the extent to which these goals had been achieved.

Last year faculty from Capital University's Adult Degree Program incorporated a new series of courses into their curriculum -- a "spine," so to speak -- which provides some connection between the beginning and the end of the program. Through this series of required and elective courses, learners are informally introduced to the ADP goals and are encouraged to reflect on their past learning experiences, to develop a rationale for a program of new learning, and to identify and work within a discipline-specific research interest. The first course, ADP 199 (Research Methods for Liberal Inquiry) is required for most learners. It helps students discover if they should take the following course in the series (ADP 299, Prior Learning Portfolio Development) to pursue academic credit for college-level experiential learning, and it introduces them to the problem-based research methods needed for the final capstone course, Senior Project (ADP 499).

This new series of courses provides an occasion to introduce students to the program's goals for its learners, but the program still lacks a formal means to continually influence learner development and measure outcomes. Throughout the year, faculty in one satellite center have team-taught the initial course in the series and developed a learning tool which they propose will help move the program toward the next level of student development and assessment -- a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio.

The portfolio idea is not a new one; for years portfolios have been used in education as a means of helping learners see their own progress and helping programs assess outcomes (Arter, Spandlel & Culham, 1995; Elbow & Belanoff, 1997). As an instructional aid in individual classes, portfolios have been helpful in motivating learners to assume responsibility for their learning and in helping both learner and teacher to see and assess progress over the course of the class (Black, 1993; Murphy, 1997).

Portfolios have also been seen as a valid programmatic assessment tool when tied directly to program goals and objectives (Erwin, 1991; Kasworm & Marienau, 1993).

Capital's Comprehensive Learning Portfolio

The authors hypothesize that the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio at Capital will serve several purposes that might apply to both learning and assessment. (1) As a learning tool, this portfolio will encourage students to view their learning holistically -- from the beginning of their post-secondary career to the end, including non-traditional college-level learning. (2) Since learners begin working on this portfolio early in the program, it will become a tool to help identify, direct, and support the learner's research interests. (3) When fully developed, the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will serve as a measure for program assessment because of its clear connection to the *Goals for ADP Learners.*

Helping Students to View Learning Holistically

Through preparing a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio, students are encouraged to view the whole of their learning -- from prior learning through the present and into the future -- instead of focussing on what it will take to get through just one class at a time. Encouraging this kind of holistic consideration of learning helps students take ownership in their own learning plan and consciously make connections between their past, present, and future learning interests. To encourage this type of thinking, the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio at Capital includes the following sections as described below: Journal Entries; Prior Learning; Degree Plan; Research; and Assessment.

Journal Entries:

Education can be a transforming experience, and journaling provides a way to encourage learners to be reflective about what they are learning and of the process of learning itself. Prompting learners to consider their thoughts and feelings along the way helps them move toward the goal of becoming self-aware learners and enables them to go back to view their progress (Taylor & Marienau, 1995). Journaling is also a less-threatening way to experiment with writing. Learners who are used to the traditional banking-system of education must often make a major transition to consider their own ideas worthy of writing for others to see. Authors in Taylor & Marienau's book write of the value of journaling, particularly for helping women learners find their voices. Phyllis Walden writes that through journaling, students "learn that they can write whether they feel like it or not and that they can generate words readily and easily. This enables them to face more formal writing assignments with confidence" (1995, p. 19).

It has been our experience that some learners are quick to catch on to the idea of journaling, while others are reluctant to share personal information or are confused about what to write. Instead of leaving journal assignments wide-open, guided assignments encourage learners to cognitively connect their experience with readings or call for more affective responses to encourage learners to become more self-aware of the *experience* of learning. By connecting personal experiences to new theories or ideas through journaling, learners actively participate in making meaning of what they read and experience. In order for them to safely write and get the most from these

assignments, it is imperative that learners feel secure that their thoughts and values will not be critically evaluated or publicly announced. Instructors should provide assurance and appropriate written feedback on journal assignments to help learners feel comfortable sharing their experiences.

Prior Learning:

Adult learners have a wide range of prior-learning experiences, often including a combination of traditional college study, military, and professional training. For the most part, they are accustomed to traditional institutions discounting any prior learning that was unaccredited. That's not the case at Capital or in other similar adult degree programs which recognize college-level prior learning experiences and use information about past academic interests to help shape new directions in learning.

In ADP 199, learners construct a chronology of *all* their prior post-secondary learning experiences and begin to collect the documentation they will need to obtain college-credit for college-level unaccredited prior learning. The experience of completing either a chronology of prior learning or a more formally written learning autobiography helps students reflect on where they've been in their learning with an eye to where they are presently and where they are headed. Too often in adult higher education, we expect learners to come to our programs as self-directed learners and forget that this is a developmental task that can be encouraged (Candy, 1991). The experience of reconsidering prior learning interests in light of future goals helps learners feel recognized for their accomplishments and at the same time provides a tool to point out connections in prior learning experiences.

Similar to a professional work portfolio, this section of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio provides a place for learners to store a collection of resumes, transcripts, certificates, and other documentation of their prior learning. This process encourages learners to view their academic interests broadly and assists them in completing the next section of the Learning Portfolio.

Degree Plan:

An important part of ADP 199 is the development of a cohesive degree plan including a description of the proposed major, a rationale, objectives, a personal goal statement, and a grid of proposed courses for the major. This plan evolves over the course of time under the guidance of course instructors, academic advisors, and peer review, and serves as a road-map to guide the learner through the program.

Capital's program attracts transfer students who have begun several different majors at various institutions. These learners come to the program accustomed to being told exactly what courses to take to complete a bachelor's degree, and without a sense of responsibility for making a connection between the required courses. The completion of a formal degree proposal and plan encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning plans and to purposefully rationalize the relationships between courses within their planned curriculum.

At Capital, learners may choose to complete a major from the *Undergraduate Bulletin* or may individualize a major that purposefully combines two or three disciplines of study. In either case, encouraging learners to think about how their prior learning connects to courses they plan to take in the future helps them create their own learning

objectives which they can later revisit and evaluate. As one student wrote in her final assessment, "I learned how to put together my degree plan and not to rely on my advisor to do it for me. Just having 'the plan' has empowered me. It has helped me to establish goals regarding my education. I also learned a great deal about what the degree means to me. By writing the degree proposal, rationale and objectives I am focused on the classes that are relevant to my degree and my chosen career field." (Dawn Sexton, Self-Assessment, 2000)

Research:

Although becoming a skilled researcher was not one of the explicit goals for ADP Learners, the program's early development of the Senior Project (ADP 499) indicates the value placed on research skills. While ADP faculty still debate the value of creative research projects versus more traditional problem-based research reports, this section of the Learning Portfolio helps learners track the development of their research interests and skills.

If this section includes (1) an initial research project completed in ADP 199; (2) other papers and projects that the learner chooses to highlight; and (3) the final Senior Project, it can become a useful tool for learners, advisors, and instructors. Often, learners struggle to find a topic or problem to research. Purposeful review of the Learning Portfolio with advisors and instructors helps learners notice trends in their academic interests and enables them to see that each project can feed off the last. Before there was an initial research-based course, learners came to the Senior Project totally unprepared for the rigorous, course-long research project. The use of ADP 199 to introduce degree planning and research methods has already provided helpful preparation for the final class. Our hope is that the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will provide evidence of students' growth in research skills throughout their education at Capital.

Assessment:

The ADP faculty have debated the use of standardized assessment tools, but ultimately decided that learners themselves are the best judges of their own academic strengths and weaknesses. In ADP 199, students are asked to review the significant learning experiences outlined in the chronologue and assess their learning styles and skills in reading, writing, math, and technology. When asked to confront their own academic record, learners are usually quite candid about their skills, particularly in mathematics. It seems easier, however, for them to rate their writing and technology skills more favorably than they should. Early assignments help the instructor point out inconsistencies between their assessments and practical skills.

This section of the portfolio provides an opportunity for personal learning assessment and also encourages learners to take time at the end of each course to reflect on their own progress. Our educational system has programmed many of us to wait on the instructor for feedback and evaluation of our work. By encouraging learners to complete a self-assessment at the end of each course, we hope to help them see that learning cannot always be judged by a grade. Our belief is that students who learn to regularly assess their own progress will become more self-aware and self-managed in their learning.

Involving Advisors and Instructors in Individualizing the Learning Experience and Identifying, Directing, and Supporting Learner Research Interests

The faculty role in ADP is multi-faceted. As a program that began primarily in an independent-study format, the role of academic advisors has continued to be considered a substantial component of the faculty teaching load. Academic advisors in ADP have always played a key role in the development of learners' degree plans, in initiatives to earn credit for prior learning, and in senior research projects. Early in the program's history, when there were fewer students and faculty, advisors had more opportunity inside and outside of class to get to know their advisees, assess their interests, and provide appropriate advice and encouragement. Over the years the opportunities for advisors to develop a close relationship with their advisees declined as a result of program growth and the multiplication of faculty responsibilities. Generally, adult learners' personal and professional goals change dramatically over the span of years during which they pursue degrees. When academic advisors are estranged from learners' experiences, it becomes more difficult to appropriately mentor and direct their academic pursuits.

The authors hypothesize that the development of a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will strengthen the relationships and collaboration between the learner, the academic advisor, and the instructor. As students themselves become more aware of their strengths and challenges as learners and their individual research interests, they will be better prepared to articulate and share with their academic advisors and instructors the information they gather in their Comprehensive Learning Portfolios. By regularly reviewing the development of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio with the learner, the advisor will be able to point out opportunities for petitions for waivers and prior learning assessment as well as trends in the learner's research interests. Likewise, the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio can become a tool for instructors to help point out areas where learners are missing relevant discipline-specific research or to highlight trends in previous interests and help make connections between content advisors and learners.

Assessing Programmatic Goals for Learners

Capital University is certainly not alone in its drive to have *all* academic programs -- both traditional and non-traditional -- validate and report on learning outcomes. There has been a national call for institutions to demonstrate educational effectiveness. The impetus for more serious consideration of assessment comes from regional accrediting associations and from adult higher education practitioner research on determining and measuring outcomes that matter to learners, their employers, and educational.

Many writers refer to the need for an assessment tool to be tied to institutional and/or program goals (Erwin, 1991; Black, 1993; Kasworm & Marienau, 1993). In searching for a way to assess college student learning, a national project group considered portfolio assessment an emerging methodology, noting value in the Alverno system of outcomes assessment (Greenwood, 1993). The use of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio in combination with individual curriculum content-based outcomes assessment may provide evidence to evaluate individual learning as well as program outcomes.

Capital's ADP has established at least some stated goals for students. The Comprehensive Learning Portfolio is designed to help learners develop and recognize skills especially related to the ADP Goals for Learners:

- Self-Managed Learning -- Through the development of a degree plan, students will learn that they can take control of their own learning. They are encouraged to plot and explain the courses needed to complete the degree and come to academic advising sessions with a plan in hand.
- Lifelong Learning -- As stated in the NCA Taskforce Report on Adult Degree Completion Programs, "Lifelong learning is not a catch-phrase nor fad but rather a trend that marks significant change in the behaviors of adults, in increasing numbers, who have come to value the need for continuous learning" (p. 16). By viewing prior learning holistically and at the same time considering personal and professional goals, learners will see themselves as lifelong learners and recognize the need for continuous learning.
- Collaborative Learning -- The development of a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio provides an interdisciplinary forum for students, peers, instructors, and advisors to work in concert to improve the learning experience. From the beginning of their experience, learners will start to see the limits of their own thinking and find value in working with others to construct a plan for their learning and to research and report issues in their fields of interest.
- Self-Aware Learning -- Students will consciously become more aware of themselves as learners as they identify their strengths and weaknesses and learning styles. By journaling through their learning experiences, students can see changes in their skills, attitudes, and values. Assessing one's own experience requires honesty and integrity and also promotes self-direction and management in learning.
- Experiential Learning -- Adult learners generally *are* lifelong learners. As they continue their formal academic education, they simultaneously are involved in job-related training within their worksites. The Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will provide a place to highlight and recognize prior learning and add documentation of current experiential learning. Through exercises that encourage outcomes-related thinking, students learn to pre-plan their experiences and become more effective experiential learners.

Conclusion

At this stage, the concept of using a Comprehensive Learning Portfolio in Capital's ADP is still being developed and tested. Already, it seems clear from student feedback that at the very least, the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio is an effective instructional tool to help students' view their learning holistically and sometimes even make appropriate alterations in their plans. As one student wrote in his final self-assessment, "It was interesting to see my academic career taking different tangents.... The Chronologue also reminded me of the various motivational and non-motivational factors that have influenced my learning" (Leonard Getts, Self-Assessment, 2000). Through the process of listing and considering prior learning, some students have decided to drop out of the program to pursue interests they considered more in line with their new insight into their own development.

Although only approximately fifty students have taken the ADP 199 course, there already seem to be results that support the usefulness of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio, especially in degree planning and in preparing for the preparation of prior learning competency statements. Over the next year, further evidence may show how this tool has aided learners in the development of their degree plans and competency statements for prior learning credit. One measure will be any difference in the number of degree plans returned for revision and any increase in submissions for prior learning credit.

Until the use of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio is expanded beyond the first class, it will be difficult to prove its usefulness for helping advisors and instructors mentor students' learning interests. The initial entries are a step toward promoting this goal, but it seems likely that students will need further encouragement to continue to develop and add to their personal portfolios. Perhaps if the program formally adopts the concept, program-wide decisions about the structure, content, and evaluation of the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will help ensure the standardized development and appropriate use of this proposed new tool. It will likely be at least two years before the first group of students with Comprehensive Learning Portfolios gets to the Senior Project.

Lastly, we hope the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio will prove to be a measure of how well ADP meets its goals. Program-wide discussions about the portfolio concept will promote faculty involvement in creating an assessment plan and encourage consideration of the "larger issues of teaching, learning, institutional goals, and student individuality" (Belanoff & Dickson, 1991, p. xxiii). In Belanoff and Dickson's words, "Portfolios enable assessment, but they also reach out beyond assessment and engender changes that could not have been foreseen." Over the next several years, we look forward to reporting on the Comprehensive Learning Portfolio's usefulness in teaching, learning, and assessment.

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Appendix 1

GOALS FOR ADP STUDENTS

In keeping with our mission, we believe that all learners in the Adult Degree Program should be able to demonstrate that they have an understanding of what it means to be a self-managed learner, a lifelong learner, a collaborative learner, a self-aware learner, and an experiential learner.

1. ***ADP students will be self-managed learners, as indicated by the following behaviors:***

- ♦ establish long range and short range learning goals/objectives that are reasonable, clear, and direct
- ♦ effectively manage their time for learning (observe university procedures and policies, budget time, discern and execute the steps required to complete learning tasks, complete responsibilities on time)
- ♦ become able to design and execute interesting and worthwhile learning projects
- ♦ avoid duplicating learning and settings for learning by seeking out truly new situations

2. ***ADP students will be lifelong learners, as indicated by the following behaviors:***

- ♦ learn how to keep current in major or professional field
- ♦ develop learning plans for their future academic and experiential learning
- ♦ identify skills and knowledge that need to be developed in areas of new learning
- ♦ continue to reflect upon and learn from new experiences and transfer skills and knowledge from one area of expertise to another, as appropriate
- ♦ adapt principles of college learning to future learning
- ♦ continue to develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes over their lifetimes

3. ***ADP students will be collaborative learners, as indicated by the following behaviors:***

- identify collaboration as it occurs on the basis of authority in the organization, collaboration among friends or among strangers, collaboration through impersonal media, collaboration among conflicting members of a groups where each share different outcome goals, and collaboration with a group with a common goal.
- identify learning that is best achieved in groups
- test one's newly developed ideas or theories with others who have trustworthy judgment
- assist others in learning
- acknowledge instructor as resource and collaborator rather than as arbitrary authority
- maintain focus and flexibility as needed in group processes
- list and identify collaboration which they have experienced, and distinguish the kinds they prefer and the kinds they find difficult

4. ***ADP students will be self-aware learners, as indicated by the following behaviors:***

- identify learning and teaching styles
- adjust to multiple learning situations/settings
- help others become aware of their learning
- identify and explore relationships between one's life and one's learning
- sort through the theoretical and the unfamiliar to find points of (dis)similarity to one's own situation
- understand the roots, the self-contradictions, and the implications of one's own primary values
- identify the inadequacy of personal experience for drawing conclusions
- recognize one's relationship with the "other"--whether near and individual or far and multiple

5. ***ADP students will be experiential learners, as indicated by the following behaviors:***

- identify, organize and articulate learning as it occurs in non-traditional, non-academic settings
- determine how to help others recognize or construct meaning from their learning activities
- identify the limits of knowledge acquired by experience and identify means of augmenting this experience to make it more meaningful
- assess other learners' experiential learning
- value interactive and active process and understand learning through group exercises
- reflect upon, compare, and evaluate active means of learning

ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES: A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

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According to Meizrow (1990) adult education is reparative education.

> As they trace their education throughout their lives, people reveal that they often enter adult education classes to *repair* (my italics), compensate for, or fill in the gaps of the past. They dream about the university because earlier in their lives they did not have the chance to study. They embark upon personal development because they hope to overcome and to recover from wounds of the past...In other words, when adults are accepted as university students, they consider themselves as having returned to a process that was, for different reasons, interrupted (Dominice, 1986, in Meizrow, 1990, p. 206).

If adult learning is reparative, then, how can we, as mentors, go on this reparative journey with adult learners who have learning disabilities? I believe we need knowledge in the areas of:

1. Basic understanding of what constitutes the types of learning disabilities, most prevalent in adult learners and the characteristics of adult learners with these types of learning disabilities.
2. Understanding of the process of adult development and how learning disabilities impact upon that development, both cognitively, affectively and psychologically
3. Understanding of how to informally assess learners for learning problems (and make referrals when appropriate)
4. Understanding of how to orchestrate learning for adults with learning problems
5. Understanding of how to encourage the process of metacognition, in order to invite self-reflection

These understandings will be addressed from both constructivism and perspective transformational theoretical viewpoints. The postsecondary educational arena is non-traditional adult education. The teacher-student relationship is defined as a mentoring relationship. Learning is defined as "the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action" (Mezirow, 1991, p.1) Teaching is based on intentional developmental outcomes as defined by Taylor, Marienau, and Fiddler (2000) that describe an evolving, growing learner who can: (a) engage with the world of ideas and learn from experience, (b) examine and challenge assumptions, (c) arrive at commitments

through self-reflection, (d) relate to others from a place of mutual enhancement rather than need (quoted in Taylor, 1999, p. 64).

The next question, driven by our examination of what understandings, we as mentors, need to address, and the developmental perspective presented of engaging adults in their movement toward autonomy, or "relating to others through mutual enhancement rather than need" is: Under scrutiny, is the conceptual framework of andragogy, introduced by Knowles, sufficient and/or equipped to support adult learners with learning disabilities? My argument is that the conceptual principles of andragogy already in place, have created the underpinnings whereby we, as mentors, can go on this journey.

Knowles (1980) in his seminal work looked at the organizing concepts of adult education and stated that in this era of knowledge explosion, and technical revolution, adult education must be primarily concerned with providing the resources and support for self-directed inquiry. Whitehead also looked at adult education in terms of life-long learning.

> In other words, as the time-span of major cultural change has become shorter than the life-span of the individual, it becomes necessary to redefine education as a process of continuing inquiry. The role of the teacher must shift from that of transmitter of information to facilitator and resource to self-directed inquiry, and to regard education as a lifelong process. For knowledge gained at any point of time will become increasingly obsolete in the course of time (Whitehead quoted in Knowles, 1980, p.266.

Knowles (1980) presented four assumptions of adult education: (a) It is a normal aspect of the process of maturation for a person to move from dependency toward increasing self-directedness, and teachers become facilitators of learning by encouraging and nurturing this movement. (b) As people grow and develop they accumulate an increasing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning (c) People become ready to learn something when they experience a need to learn it, in order to cope more satisfyingly with real-life tasks or problems. Learning is an internal process that engages their whole being-including intellectual, emotional, and physiological functions. The facilitator has a responsibility to create conditions and provide tools and procedures for helping learners discover their 'need to know.' Therefore, learning problems can be sequenced according to the learner's readiness to learn. (4) Learners see education as a process of developing increased competence to achieve their full potential in life. (pp. 43-44).

Knowles (1980) proposed seven process elements of his andragogy model of learning: (a) climate should be relaxed, trusting, mutually respectful, informal, collaborative, warm and supportive, (b) planning is done mutually by learner and facilitator, (c) diagnosis of needs is done by mutual assessment, (d) setting of objectives are created by mutual negotiation, (e) learning activities include experiential techniques, inquiry projects, independent study, (f) evaluation is accomplished by learner-collected evidence. (p.390)

The great pioneer adult-education theorist, Edward C. Linderman summed up the purpose of adult education:

> In short, my conception of adult education is this: a cooperative venture in nonauthoritarian, informal learning, the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults that makes education coterminous with life and hence elevates living itself to the level of adventurous experiment . (quoted in Knowles, p.57)

After first discussing the proposed understanding of needs, I will briefly present a successful model program for adults with learning disabilities utilized at a traditional postsecondary college, which is based on Knowles assumptions and process elements, along with, dialectic inquiry. Finally, I will "plug in" the proposed learning needs, coupled with the learning theories of andragogy, and the elements of a successful program for adults with learning disabilities to the non-traditional postsecondary setting of adult education, thereby presenting a model for mentors, to go on the reparative journey with adults who have learning disabilities.

Gerber and Reiff (1994) estimate that 5-20% of the population is affected by a learning disability. Henderson stated, "the percentage of fulltime college students who have indicated that they have a learning disability is 25%" (quoted in Shaprino and Rich 1999). Shaprino and Rich (1999) stated, learning disabilities are not bound by culture or language. They are in all socio-economic groups and can be found throughout the world. Approximately the same number of males as females has learning disabilities. Learning disabilities tend to run in families. According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education, known causes of Learning Disabilities are: (a) genetic defects, (b) endocrine gland dysfunction, (c) pre-natal malnutrition, (d) maternal substance abuse, (e) birth trauma, (f) chronic illness (ear infections, etc.), (g) early childhood high fevers, (h) lead poisoning, (i) oxygen deprivation, (j) accidents, (k) toxins, and (l) diet. (Young, 1995, p.5) Newman and Buka have listed as causes of learning impairments: (a) prenatal alcohol exposure, (b) maternal smoking, (c) prenatal exposure to drugs, (d) low birth weight, (e) and child abuse and neglect. (quoted in Young, 1995).

There is no single operational definition of learning disabilities (Jorden, 2000). According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a student is said to have learning disability if there is a significant discrepancy between ability and achievement in one or more of the following seven areas: "oral expression, listening, comprehension, written expression, basic reading, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, and reasoning" (quoted in Shapino and Rich, 1999, p.16). In 1985, the Rehabilitation Services Administration or Vocational Rehabilitation system presented an operational definition for adults with learning disabilities to determine eligibility and establishing learning disabilities as a neuropsychological condition:

> ...a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding, and/or using concepts through verbal (spoken or written) language or nonverbal means. This disorder manifests itself with a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence, and emotional maturity. (quoted in Young, 1995).

It is important to point out that there is no formal diagnosis of learning disabilities. Learning disabilities is a definitional term, not a diagnostic term. In the educational system, the term is utilized to represent an educational diagnosis, as a requirement for special education entitlement. In other words, eligibility policies have resulted in an operational definition for the educational system and for the vocational rehabilitation system.

Gerber and Reiff (1994) have stated, "in order to assign a diagnosis, classification using a recognized diagnostic system must be established" (p. 57). These authors cite the Diagnostical and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-1V) of the American Psychiatric Association and the Association and the International Classification of Diseases (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) "to be the most logical option for adults with learning disabilities. This grouping contains a range of diagnostic options corresponding to several manifestations of learning disabilities" (Gerber and Reiff (1994, p.57). The grouping of Specific Developmental Disorders includes the academic skills of reading, arithmetic, and expressive writing disorders. Language and Speech Disorders include articulation, expressive language and receptive language disorders.

Wren (2000) cites research done by Johnson and Blalock stating that the most common types of learning difficulties in adults are: written language problems, oral language problems, nonacademic problems, and attention and organization problems.

According to Wren (2000) written language problems are the most common pattern of adults with learning disabilities. Reading problems are referred to as dyslexia, which can involve problems in both reading or receptive language and spelling or writing, which is productive language. Dyslexic adults can encounter problems with oral and silent reading in context, with reading comprehension, and with both spelling and writing. However, "because reading and spelling are such complex activities and require a wide variety of cognitive processes, not all those with dyslexia will exhibit exactly the same profile of processing strengths and weaknesses" (Wren, 2000, p.32).

Another common type of learning disability, is difficulty with oral language, "which can involve difficulty with receptive language (listening), as well as expressive language (speaking)" (Wren, 2000, p.32). Adults with this type of learning disability can exhibit " frequent misperceptions, misunderstandings, incorrect word usage, mispronunciations, faulty, syntax and poor organization"(Wren, 2000, p.32). Language abilities tend to be uneven. Although

the learner can have a desire to communicate precisely, communication requires concentration because of difficulties in selecting, retrieving, and organizing relevant information.

Non-academic problems or what is termed, a nonverbal learning disability, entails nonverbal processing problems, which involve tactile and visual-spatial perception and judgment. These nonverbal processing problems impact math skills and social competency. Inherent characteristics may include:

> Problems with perception and interpretation of facial expression, gesture, body language, inflection, and tone of voice. This may also include the inability to make central inferences in social situations, poor judgment of mood or attitude, and problems discriminating the response requirements in social situations (Wren, 2000, p.33)

Because of the disorganizing effect of not being able to problem solve, (which involves, perception, judgment and sequencing); accompanied by childhood wounds and unresolved grief, the learner may become frustrated and lack confidence, which compromises his or her ability to cope. Feelings of anxiety can lead to feelings of helplessness, and finally, to feelings of hopelessness. Because of the feelings of being incompetent, the learner may believe that failure is the nature of his or her true self. Lacking the metacognitive skill of self-reflection, the adult with learning disabilities may not be able to develop a sense of self that is detached from his or her cognitive functions and emotional states (Wren, 2000).

Adult developmentalists (Levinson, 1978; Kegan, 1982) cite life and developmental transitions as bringing about the ability to individuate from culture and society, and to be able to engage and listen to, the "voice" of the self. Post formal thinking, the crowing glory of cognition is supposed to develop in adulthood. What happens if these learners, through feelings of incompetence and hopelessness are not able to produce metacognitive skills, and become self-reflective and critical thinkers?

Herein lies the beauty of being a mentor in non-traditional postsecondary education. Adult education is reparative. The dialectic nature of perspective transformative education and constructivism theory create the context for the adult learner with learning disabilities to think about his or her own socio-emotional educational history, thus starting the reparative efforts toward self-esteem, and the regulation of anxieties that will allow the learner to access deeper cognitive constructs.

Metacognitive skills are encouraged in the mentor-student relationship by the object consistency, and unconditional positive regard of the mentor. Mentors, according to Daloz (1986) are the guides that "embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpet arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers, and point out unexpected delights along the way" (p.16).

Utilizing the basic process elements of Knowles such as: mutual planning of learning contracts, diagnosis of learning needs such as learning styles, mutual agreement of alternative assessments, and a climate of trust, warmth, and

mutual respect, the mentor and student enter into what Vygotsky has termed, the zone of proximal development. According to Bloom (1995), the ZPD represents the student's growing edge, and it is the space in which, the learner's grasp exceeds his or her reach. Bloom (1995) states that it is in the ZPD that the "images of future growth begin to take shape in the student's mind" (p.7).

This element of "images of future growth" is the hope that the Curry College Learning Center in Massachusetts seeks to awaken in their adult students with learning disabilities. Utilizing the dialectic method, in the mentor-student relationship of the ZPD, the reparative journey begins with the hope that the journey that they are embarking upon, with their mentor, will be repairing and fill in the developmental gaps of their previous educational history.

Adelizzi (1995), a teacher at the Learning Center discusses the classroom trauma, which commonly occurs throughout the educational history of LD children and the resulting symptomology that can be seen in adults entering postsecondary educational experiences:

> Classroom trauma, which commonly occurs throughout the education of a child with LD, and grows with him/her into adulthood, can paralyze the individual into a state of helplessness. When many of our PAL students reach Curry College, they can finally breathe a comfortable sigh of relief, sensing almost right away that this is a safe place to disclose their feelings about their learning differences and their classroom experiences. However, their hypervigilance about future classroom traumas never ceases; their radar is always on alert. They are constantly scanning the environment and the professionals with whom they interact for any sign of threat. (P.91)

Adelizzi (1995) further states that this type of psychological trauma "may leave the student with diminishing self-esteem and in a state of fear, humiliation or learned helplessness to the degree where similar situations will be avoided by the student in the future" (p.91). The original and specific cause could have been a person such as a teacher or peer, although with each repetition, a perpetrator is not necessary to induce fear or humiliation because, any situation which is reminiscent of the original classroom trauma, is sufficient to bring back feelings of fear or humiliation. The possible psychological symptoms triggered such as: anxiety, panic, dissociation, attentional disturbances and depression may impede the process of learning. In elementary education, Caine and Caine have called this perceived threat; downshifting (1994) and they have devised methods to manage downshifting in classroom situations.

The methods that the Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL) have devised are based on the mentor-student relationship. Pennini and Peltz (1995) believe that the "commitment to engendering mentoring relationships is based upon an understanding that students who have had traumatic educational experiences need a teaching/learning relationship that goes beyond the conventional faculty/student relationship to building a supportive environment for self reflection" (57)

Without fear of being threatened, because of the supportive climate and the feeling of having control over their learning by mutually agreed upon alternative learning and assessment methods, the mentor-student relationship "becomes the moving force behind each developmental step in metacognitive awareness" (Adelizzi and Goss (1995).

> As we teach a new concept, a new skill, we move our students from the task at hand to a deeper understanding of how that learning actually took place, and to why this process is so uniquely personal. We walk with our students, sometimes beside them, sometimes ahead of them, some times behind he, shepherding them in their journeys of discovering themselves as competent learners. (p.6).

These authors sum up the program at PAL by stating that even though they provide interventions such as: adaptive technology, learning strategies, assist in problem solving, "metacognition, thinking about thinking, is the hallmark of our program and the essence of what we do every day" (21).

> What we do is get the students to think about their thinking. We mentor them in becoming aware of their own mental processes and in understanding the cognitive tasks involved in their learning and problem solving. We encourage them to become experts in seeing how their own mental abilities and personality characteristics intersect with particular academic tasks and help them to develop and select from a repertoire of strategies that contribute to their learning effectively. We guide them in evaluating the outcomes and in adjusting their behaviors accordingly. (P.22).

How can we, as mentors, in a non-traditional postsecondary setting establish the requirements to instill hope and produce the practical requirements for educational instruction adults with learning disabilities?

My argument is that, we already have, in place the theoretical knowledge and practice to instill hope and encourage the developmental journey of reparative education. I have discussed our theoretical underpinnings. We are already adherents to constructivist's techniques of dialogue. We are already interested in the techniques to encourage psychological, and cognitive developmental lags in order for our students to reach their full potential. My point is this: with the basic theoretical bases in place, we just need an understanding of the practical matters of how to utilize learning methods useful with adults with learning disabilities. The literature now abounds with these methods of learning styles, and the use of accommodative equipment. Let us open our doors to these adults who are so deserving of post-secondary education. As we survey the landscape of non-traditional postsecondary education we find, that because of the very nature of our ideologies and theoretical bases we are ready to go on the reparative journey with adults who have learning disabilities.

For those students who already know they have a learning disability, the solutions are simple, utilize the seven process elements of anadgray: (a) utilize the mentor-student relationship to establish the climate of trust and the dialectic nature of the zone of proximal development for the questioning techniques that encourage metacognition and self-reflection (b) the diagnosing of learning needs, can include an informal assessment to establish learning styles, which can be self-administered and discussed, establishing leaning strengths. Learning needs could include adaptive technology to augment the learner's ability to take part in gathering information needed to be a life-long learner. Dialectic teaching instruction, that entails on-going learning needs assessment is a perfect "fit" for the adult learning with learning disabilities. Learning activities and the process of assessment is mutually agreed upon. Mentors in non-traditional education already employ authentic assessment.

However, according to Shapiro and Rich (1999) it is typical for many adults to have little or no understanding of their learning disability throughout childhood and adolescent. The field of special education was just beginning to be recognized in the 1960s and special education services were limited until legislation provided the impetus, framework, and funding for care. It is possible that the student's learning disability was not adequately identified, or the student was looked upon as having poor motivation or not 'living up" to his or her potential (remember that leaning disabilities have nothing to do with I.Q.).

By utilizing the seven process elements, the reparative process of adult education can begin. The student, in the mentor-student relationship can express their cognitive/affective educational history, thus being able to reflect upon, and identify learning problems. This process of being able to observe and reflect is the first step in metacognitive problem solving which means, the student is stepping back and separating the true self from feelings of failure. Wengler (1995) a professor at Curry College reports on the phenomenon of her students finally being able to step back from the shame, of not being able to learn "in the typical way."

> My students report the joy that they feel when they finally understand why they haven't been able to control their learning effectiveness. It is always reported to be a life changing experience, because these learning disabled students can finally share all the pain and hidden fears that continually plagued them. Just knowing the etiology is a major step toward empowerment, and the awakening spirit immediately senses this. (Wengler, 1995, p.137)

Informal self-assessment of learning strengths, learning styles and learning needs, can provide the beginning stags of diagnostic teaching. Mutually agreed upon authentic assessment, can include the process of self-assessment, thus enhancing self-reflection and metacognitive awareness. Outside referral systems may be offered, depending upon the severity of the learning disability.

An ethnographic study of successful adults with learning disabilities done by Reiff, Gerber and Ginsberg (1996) reveals that "the seed of their success was

simply the desire to succeed" (p.11) These authors asked if it was possible to instill desire after so many messages of failure. The answer they received was, "the influence of one positive teacher can overcome many negative messages and school experiences." (p.15) The question of: Under scrutiny, is the conceptual framework of andrgogy, introduced by Knowles, sufficient and/or equipped to support adult learners with learning disabilities? Has been addressed. The conceptual principles of andragogy already in place have created the underpinnings whereby we, as mentors, can go on this reparative journey with adults who have learning disabilities.

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IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE: INFORMAL OBSERVATIONS OF ADULT ACCOUNTING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY AND ASSESSMENT

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Introduction

For over twenty years Capital University has been delivering degree completion through its Adult Degree Program unit. Like other "alternative" programs, the management and accounting majors were attractive to learners for many years, especially those with employers involved in some form of tuition reimbursement program. In the 1980s and early 1990s corporate relationships evolved that encouraged adult learners to complete degrees, especially in business-related disciplines and enrollments increased in these majors.

The flexibility of program delivery and variety of "adult-friendly" assessment methods used with the nontraditional population have been at least two of the most popular features of Capital's ADP for learners. Features such as class scheduling flexibility and learning assessment alternatives may have helped market the program to prospective learners, but they are also important benchmarks assuring we deliver a quality education as outlined in the *Principles of Good Practice for Alternative and External Degree Programs for Adults.*

Along with the desirability of compliance with ACE's *Principles of Good Practice,* as accounting educators we are concerned with the characteristics of a good accounting education as outlined by professional organizations such as the American Accounting Association. A recent venture into gathering information for possible ACBSP (Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs) by our institution has led many faculty members to questions regarding the outcomes of our teaching. In the Adult Degree Program it is imperative we are able to point to specific examples indicating specific learning outcomes of our adult learners because we are being compared to students and teaching methodologies in the traditional undergraduate program. Once again we are being asked to show evidence of results that indicate similar outcomes with different inputs to the educational process. In some respects we find ourselves in the position of needing to educate our more traditional colleagues as to the nature and value of alternative forms of higher education delivery mechanisms as "inputs" of the educational process we deliver in ADP.

Defining Quality—Adult Learners and Faculty

There are two important aspects to a definition of "quality" that need to be considered: the adult learner viewpoint and the faculty viewpoint.

The perception of adult learners in the program is an important one. Whether we like to admit it or not, many times they do perceive themselves as consumers of the educational product we offer them. The entire issue of the "consumer" mentality is a controversial one that is in total opposition to the academic viewpoint of learning and educational standards.

In the Cleveland Center, a smaller piece of the learners' perceptions deal with how they view testing as a learning assessment strategy. Historically in-class testing has not often been considered a favorable "alternative" approach to the assessment of learning outcomes in our Adult Degree Program Center, and students have been accustomed to extended case studies, problems/homework etc. done outside of the classroom experience as a major piece of their learning outcome assessment. Thus, testing has not been perceived as a favorable strategy to assess learning by our learners.

The other side of the "quality" issue is the view of our faculty. We tend to look at our work and its assessment in terms of gathering statistical data on learners and comparing it with standards set by ourselves or by outside accrediting agencies.

Driscoll and Wicks (1998) warn educators "many colleges and university practice a 'market-in' approach, with the satisfaction of student wants and needs being paramount." In today's highly competitive and technology-driven adult higher education market, it is true that the ability to appeal to students' personal time constraints by "fitting in" education into hectic lifestyles is a pressing mandate for alternative programs. However, the issue of quality in the educational experience is not always emphasized in the marketing efforts.

"Marketing strategies in business education appear to focus primarily upon differentiation and quality....Quality expectations are themselves perceptual phenomena, formed by past experiences and information obtained through the media, word of mouth, and advertising. How quality is defined and perceived by students makes it extremely difficult to differentiate services in this manner" according to Driscoll and Wicks.

There is little argument with the fact that any attempt to structure an academic program around the demands of "students as consumers" is both academically and ethically unsound. Over the years, however, our adult learners have come to realize at the urging of faculty, that to a large degree they are "in control" of their educational destinies as self-directed, self-managed learners. They have come to appreciate both the flexibility of classes offered alternate weeks and having their learning assessed through alternative processes such as take-home exams, projects, and class presentations; these are methods encouraged in the *Principles of Good Practice.* Such flexibility often translates to the learners' perception of having more control in their own educational experience.

Accounting Education Change Commission Standards

In 1990 the Accounting Education Change Commission, with funding from the major national accounting firms (then known as the 'Big 8') composed a list of guidelines of how the knowledge, skills and abilities needed by accounting graduates could be translated to specific skills:

"1. General knowledge,
2. Intellectual skills,
3. Interpersonal skills,
4. Communication skills,

5. Organizational and business knowledge,
6. Accounting knowledge
7. Accounting skills, and
8. Personal capacities and attitudes" (AECC in Russell and Berlin, 1999).

"In Proposition Statement No. 1, the AECC called for a focus on intellectual, communication and interpersonal skills within an active learning framework....with emphasis on learning how to learn.... The prospective accounting, as a liberally education professional, should be able to demonstrate an 'ability to locate, obtain and organize information,' 'identify and solve unstructured problems in unfamiliar setting,' work effectively in a group environment, and demonstrate 'effective reading, listening, writing and speaking' skills" (AECC in Bradford and Peck, 1997).

These standards are the desired foundation of the accounting curriculum and we believe addressed by our major and the general education requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences at Capital University.

***Principles of Good Practice* Standards**

Standards outlined in *The Principles of Good Practice* state that programs are "also responsible for aiding students in the development of skills and abilities in critical thinking, communication, problem solving, learning resource utilization, and analysis and integration of knowledge. The development of these skills and abilities encourages students to become more autonomous, self-directed learners" (American Council on Education, 1990). These skills desired in outstanding adult programs appear quite similar to those listed above in the AECC project.

Principle 5 of *The Principles of Good Practice* includes in its subprinciples three key points making the assessment of student learning geared to adult learners:

"5.3 The assessment criteria, methods, techniques or strategies are developed by faculty and academic professional on the basis of how effectively they might determine the extent to which the specific learning outcomes are achieved.

5.4 The assessment process for student learning provides ongoing feedback between teacher and learner regarding the acquisition of both knowledge and skills.

5.5 The development of student self-assessment skills is an integral part of the learning process and is critical to the growth of self-managing, autonomous learning." (ACE, 1990)

The American Accounting Association and Accounting Education Change Commission have referenced the need for accounting students to become more active learners rather than passive. The model of accounting instruction they hoped to change was the traditional lecture style, assessed by textbook examinations based on the students' abilities to memorize and repeat facts. It was their hope students in the newer accounting curriculum would have learned

to approach their own new learning differently. The student "asks questions about new material, connects it with what she already knows, organizes facts and rules into concepts and principles....this student is aware of a variety of learning strategies, knows how to use them, and consciously chooses the strategies that will be most effective for a specific learning task. Most important of all, this student enjoys learning, wants to learn more, and will continue to learn out of personal and professional interest" (Francis, Mulder, Stark, 1995). They call this a movement toward "intentional learning."

The characteristics delineated by the AECC clearly parallel the characteristics used in our program to describe self-managed, self-directed lifelong learners, one of the overarching goals of our Adult Degree Program.

Internal and External Influences on Faculty

New internal and external pressures have caused our Center's accounting faculty to reconsider their definition of quality in the major. Discussions at the department level beginning the gathering of data for ACBSP accreditation have led the Center's business faculty to reconsider their own definitions of quality instruction. Internally, faculty recently sensed that the amount of material required in accounting courses, especially at the introductory levels, simply is not being adequately covered in the abbreviated delivery format used in our ADP center, where classes typically meet once every two weeks.

Faculty observed that learners in the upper level accounting courses simply did not have "all the pieces" when it was time for detailed analyses of case studies and problems in their homework, and they felt that the lack of class contact time contributed to this problem. Some faculty believed that the recent reluctance of adult learners to form and use study groups for homework assignments contributed to the lack of content understanding. Others felt that in-class exams had not been used enough to require learners demonstrate their accounting and critical thinking skills.

They also agreed that general success in the accounting major, as well as the external and unspoken internal mandate to have a "high" pass rate on the CPA exam, requires students have covered and internalized accounting material at an in-depth level from the introductory stages due to the developmental nature of the subject. It was felt that a course more traditionally structured with weekly meetings to process information and test comprehension levels was critical to program success.

One recent change implemented by faculty in Center accounting courses was a more deliberate use of in-class exams to assess learning. This was not a popular change, as one might expect. One learner refused to take a mid-term exam. Another dropped a course because she felt she could not pass the tests.

Some pressure is being felt by faculty as a result of the university's decision to apply for ACBSP accreditation of the undergraduate business program. The information gathering required for this self-study is comprehensive. There is some concern about the acceptability of the alternative delivery system of the Adult Degree Program, although it appears the process offers opportunities to explain and account for the differences. Nonetheless, the

need to demonstrate the satisfaction of "stakeholders" in the program includes both faculty and learners.

The policy and practice changes by faculty to improve the learners' outcomes in the accounting major and eventual success in the accounting field are perceived as positive changes to the quality of the program from the faculty viewpoint. The changes will hopefully eventually be shown as contributors to the success of the learners in their professions, especially by providing a stronger background and preparation for MBA classes and the CPA exam. Actual quantifiable evidence will not be available for at least three years, though, as it takes time for learners to cycle through the major.

Background

Many of the concerns voiced by our faculty have already been researched, but with students in traditional program settings.

Gayle and Rayburn (1999) surveyed 112 business students who took either an eight-week or 16-week course that students in the longer class performed better overall (test scores and GPA), and that the students who consistently completed homework performed better regardless of class length.

Zarzeski (1998) found that the use of a flexible student learning contract was a useful pedagogical tool when used with Intermediate Accounting I students. Her work discussed survey results regarding student choice strategies, grade improvement and attitudes about the activities.

Marcheggiani, Davis, and Sander (1999) found little difference in introductory accounting students' examination performance or their attitudes toward the accounting profession based on a comparison of instructional technique. One group was instructed using a group-Socratic method and the other used an interactive lecture style.

Cottrell and Harwood (1998) studied the effectiveness of classroom assessment techniques in accounting. In a comparison of one class using classroom assessment techniques and one not using them, it was found that more research was needed pertaining to the mix of variables affecting classroom instruction and student attitudes toward accounting. There was no evidence of better student participation or more positive attitudes.

Finally, Phillips (1999) surveyed business students to identify their general preferences for learning and testing environments. This study was precipitated by a growing number of students' self-selection to avoid multiple choice and essay tests. This study concluded that students who had developed a preference for assessment using quick and easy problems were likely to perform poorly on unstructured tasks such as analyzing business cases.

The Adult Learners' Perceptions

How do our learners perceive quality in the accounting major? Is there a difference between how faculty and learners assess quality outcomes of the accounting major? At present there are only approximately twelve accounting majors in the Cleveland Center, but their opinions are nonetheless important, as they are the only ones we have. Since they are all the advisees of the author, it

was relatively easy to contact them for brief interviews. Nine of the twelve agreed to participate in the survey.

The following open-ended questions were asked:

1. How do you define "quality" in accounting classes?
2. What are the characteristics of quality in accounting courses?
3. How do you know you are getting quality instruction?
4. How should learning in accounting courses be measured and assessed?
5. Is it important to achieve a high level of success in achievement of learning outcomes of an accounting course? Why?
6. Are any particular accounting courses more important than others? Why?
7. Do you feel you are getting a quality accounting education at Capital University? Explain.

Results

Nine out of twelve adult learner accounting majors surveyed were willing to share their thoughts for this study. Their experience in our program ranged from a learner who had been in the major about one year to a graduating senior. The detailed narrative responses will be shared in transcript format at the presentation of this paper.

The responses to question one, pertaining to their definition of quality in accounting courses, can be summarized by saying that adult learners feel strongly that the curriculum should be based on what is required in the accounting field and they perceive quality in accounting courses as having an instructor who has practiced in the field of accounting.

Their perception of characteristics of quality in accounting courses pertain to the use of good teaching practices (opportunities for class participation, interaction, practice and instructor feedback) as well as the selection and use of a good textbook. The responses indicated that adult accounting majors tend to keep texts they have purchased and refer back to them throughout their courses in the major. One respondent summarized the characteristics of quality as "lecture, homework, quizzes, tests."

Question three asked them to identify how they knew they were getting quality instruction. Five responses alluded to the ability to understand and complete homework assignments with little difficulty following a class meeting, and two identified the ability to apply their learning to real life work situations as indicative of quality instruction.

An important question in the survey was to identify the learners' perceptions of how learning should be measured and assessed. Interestingly, six of the nine mentioned some combination of tests and/or case studies. One learner was adamant that multiple choice tests were "a WASTE of time!" Another felt that the testing she had experienced was good practice for the CPA exam and further that she felt testing in accounting was difficult due to the nature of the course and the fact that some problems could have multiple solutions.

Eight out of nine learners felt that a high level of success in meeting learning outcomes of an accounting course is important. The reason for this

response related again to the necessity to be competent in the accounting field and workplace, including being prepared for the CPA exam.

Question six pertained to their perception of which courses are most important. Five of the nine felt that some combination of the foundations or fundamentals courses with intermediate accounting were most important. The reason stated by most was the incremental learning nature of the subject.

The last question asked specifically if they felt they were getting a quality accounting education in our program. Of course this is a "loaded question" when asked by the learner's academic advisor, so the responses indicating "caring" and "qualified" instructors was no surprise. Interestingly, learners used this question to comment on their preference for classes instead of independent studies for their accounting courses. Some still indicated their strong preference for our delivery format of classes every two weeks, but also alluded to the need to meet on a regular basis to ask questions and get feedback from instructors.

Conclusions

One of the original concerns that prompted this survey was the fact that learners had complained when instructors had started using more frequent tests in accounting courses. It would appear from these responses that adult learners are well aware of the need for testing as well as aware that in the accounting field they will be expected to meet a credentialing standard by passing the CPA exam. Perhaps the initial complaining was an isolated incident or occurred simply because it was "the thing to do" at the time. This survey did not study the specifics of testing, such as in-class exams versus take-home exams, and that may have prompted the initial resistance.

Several of the responses mentioned the fact that accounting as a major builds upon the foundation and intermediate level courses. It is this fact that prompted the faculty to feel that the bi-weekly class meeting schedule was not sufficient in terms of providing adequate knowledge and learning of the accounting fundamentals in the two lower level accounting courses. It would appear that further investigation into the feasibility of weekly class meetings for all accounting courses might be desirable. However, whether or not the university is willing to compensate instructors at a level consistent with this level of teaching activity for such small (generally four or fewer) classes needs to be addressed. In the past the university has not been supportive of distance learning initiatives that could remedy the small class situation by creating larger groups, but other instructional load/compensation models may need to be investigated for the accounting major.

With respect to the application of the *Principles of Good Practice,* it would appear that learners are willing to participate in the discussion and determination of assessment strategies. Perhaps it would be beneficial to share the *Principles* with accounting faculty (the majority of whom are adjunct faculty in the Cleveland Center) and suggest that courses be restructured to provide more clear and open opportunities to design and plan accounting courses with adult learners.

Another important conclusion that is evident in the results is the very strong emphasis adult learners place on the relevancy of their accounting

education to their work and "the real world." The value of hiring adjunct faculty who are experienced and credentialed in the field cannot be ignored both from the standpoint of accreditation and also the value placed on these faculty by learners.

Lastly, as the university and business department proceed with their data gathering for the ACBSP accreditation process, it may be worthwhile to consider refining this survey and using it as a tool to obtain feedback from the adult learners in all three Adult Degree Program Centers. Feedback from learners is an important part of the program's self-assessment process.

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ASSESSING FOR METACOGNITION COMPETENCIES IN AN ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

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Introduction

The development of a complete person has long been the goal of higher education (Chickering). The transformation and emancipator power of adult learning is often heralded as an objective of adult education (Freire, Daloz). Leading adult constructive-developmental theorists, such as Robert Kegan, explain that education not only changes what learners know but also stimulates "qualitative shifts in perception" that change how the learner views the world. According to these theories, education changes how we know. These "overarching outcomes" include "meta-outcomes, perhaps, such as the understanding that knowledge is neither given nor gotten, but constructed; the ability to take perspective on one's own beliefs; and the realization that learning and development are worthy lifelong goals (Taylor & Marienau, 1997, p. 233).

A successful educational program produces learning that is far greater than the sum of its parts. However, when qualitative transformations face off with quantitative assessment, the meta-outcomes may be short changed. In the rush to demonstrate that each course is achieving its stated goals, the macro-competencies are often overlooked. A checklist of programmatic outcomes often fails to address those very competencies that define educated adults who are able to contribute at a high level as individuals, professionals, family members, community participants, and world citizens.

The Challenge

Some adult higher education programs have developed approaches to defining and assessing overarching overcomes. Bench marking colleges serve as models of best practice (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 1999). However, for many programs a more modest, but no less important process, is necessary.

Aurora University is private, independent, comprehensive institution which is offering an increasing number of adult undergraduate cohort programs. Cohorts are assembled in response to the shared professional advancement desires of individuals or the human resource requirements of an employer. In the cohort, students progress through most of their classes as a learning community. The particular cohort program discussed is a cooperative venture between the university and a school district to "grow our own teachers." Local residents, who work as non-professional school staff, are encouraged to pursue degrees which will qualify them to become certified teachers.

Based on the amount of transferable credits and assessment tests in reading, writing, and math, the learners are placed in three status groups: entering students, education majors, or college preparatory students. During the first year the first 2 groups take college level classes in the appropriate strand while together they participate in a series of one credit courses called the Learn about Learning series. The third strand take college-preparatory classes sponsored by the school district.

This program has the opportunity to not only foster the theory and practice of quality teaching and learning but also model the process. Exposed to fine teaching and

transformational learning, the members of the cohort may individually and as a group, reshape the education process for the school district. Their similarity in career and community commitment enables an integrated curriculum continuum of primary and secondary outcomes. Primary outcomes are largely discipline or course based. While, secondary outcomes, such as life-long learning ability and the perception of self as a co-creator of meaning, transcend courses and optimally the program.

The challenge is to enables students at various stages in the constructive developmental continuum (Kegan, 1994) to advance in course-based and macro-competencies. Following is a modest step towards an integrated curriculum to stimulate and assess programmatic meta-outcomes while remaining realistic about limited joint faculty planning time.

Meeting the Challenge

The program is designed to address many constructiveness developmental issues (Kegan, 1994). Adults face issues of self-perception as soon as they begin thinking of enrolling in college. The fear that their quest for career advancement will be perceived of as abandonment of their status quo in family and community relationships is too overwhelming for many perspective students. Those, who are able to surmount the logistical and self-perception issues facing adult learners, continue searching for a balance between autonomy and community. Aspiring first generation college learners, especially women, have traditionally been acculturated towards a strong commitment towards family and community. Going to college often feels like the abdication of the values of self-sacrifice and group coherency in exchange for the selfish pursuit of individual advancement. After all, they are changing established patterns and relationships. Going to school requires some degree of help with household and childcare duties from someone whose life tasks are "less important."

As they start taking classes, the learners will meet educators who will expect of their students more that the acquisition of new skills and information. They will also be expected to learn in new ways and become "self-directed" learners. The demands of the mind will include self-motivation, critical thinking, and perception of self as co-authoring one's life. The complexities of the world make corresponding demands on the human consciousness. While the abstract level of stage 3 thinking was sufficient for the traditional society, abstract systems thinking of stage 4 is required for the modern world. Third order constructions are "systematic procedures for generating and evaluating ideas, hypotheses, and sincere opinions. . . . higher education. . . requires the cognitive sophistication to construct complex systems, the structure of the fourth order." (Kegan, 1994, p. 286). The developmental continuum to Stage 4 of "personal authority" requires is a fundamental reassessment of self. By becoming one's own guide, one is well aware that nothing is certain. What lays ahead "is a long, often painful voyage, and one that, for much of the time, may feel more like mutiny than a merely exhilarating (and less self-conflicted) expedition to discover new lands." (Kegan, p. 275).

The mental organization principle is an internal logic or epistemology of the subject-object relationship. "'Subject' refers to those elements of our knowing or organizing that we are identified with, ties to, fused with, or embedded in. We have objects; we are subjects" (Kegan, 1994, p. 33). The object is distinct enough to be capable of mind manipulation. "'Object' refers to those elements of our knowing or

organizing that we can reflect on, handle, look at, be responsible for, relate to each other, take control of, internalize, assimilate, or otherwise operate upon" (Kegan, p. 33). Metacognition is the skill which stimulates the transformation from Stage 3 to 4.

Metacognition

Metacognition is the competency for the "appearance-reality distinction." (Siegal, 1999, p. 267). An individual with a well-developed metacognitive capacity realizes that one's thoughts and perceptions can significantly be altered by personal experience, cultural context, emotional context, developmental status, and the passage of time. Learners competent in metacognition are able to distinguish between "what is" from "what can be". No longer limited as the "subject" of their perception, they are able to view their position as an "object" for analysis. Metacognition requires the distancing of self as actor and instead viewing one's actions as a a part of progressive play in which one has a part in composing the next acts. Metacognition provides the developing adult's mind "the ability to perform a number of unique processes: thinking about thinking itself; forming a representation of one's own mind; becoming aware of sensations, images, and beliefs about the self; and reflection on a nature of emotion and perception" (Siegal, p. 267).

As therapist and adult educators know, adults are most susceptible to systemic change when stimulated by internal or external turbulence. Yet though changes in self-perception are the impetus for growth, higher level cognitive functions such as metacogntion can only begin functioning when excessive arousal is lessened. A recently divorced woman may realize that a college education will enable her to become self-sufficient. However, she will succeed only if she perceives of herself as having the capacity to orchestrate the components of her life and then actually conducts that life.

Research in emotional intelligence shows that in order for people to be ready for successful behavioral changes, four levels of readiness are traversed.

> Oblivious: . . . it isn't that they can't see the solution — they can't see the problem. . . .
> Contemplation: . . . they need to improve and have begun to think about how to do so. . . .
> Preparation: . . . They are aware of the problem, see that there are ways to solve it, and palpably anticipate doing so. . . . [frequently] propelled to this heightened stage of readiness by a dramatic event. . . .
> Action:. . . . People embrace the plan, start practicing its steps, and actually change how they act . . . . (Goleman, 1998, p. 328).

This ability to co-create one's life is stimulated by the metacognitive skills found in higher education. For the thinking required by higher education is ideally adapted to the cognitive demands of modern life. "But it would be the cruelest of ironies for a school, of all places, to at the outset rather than to teach toward its gradual accomplishment over time" (Kegan, 1994, p. 287).

Research in both constructive-developmental and emotional intelligence theory are useful in building curriculum to prepare adults for the rigors of today's workplace.

"'Emotional intelligence' refers to *the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relations*" (Goleman, 1998, p. 316). "The Emotional Competence Framework" is composed of the both "Personal Competencies" which "determine how we manage ourselves" and "Social Competence" which "determine how we handle relationships." (Goleman, p. 27). Though the abilities described as "emotional" are distinct from cognitive capacities, both high level cognitive and emotional intelligences have the common underpinning of mindful self-analysis and action.

Learners, coached to reflect on their internal thought processes, are developing the metacognitive skills which will equip them to consciously manage their own lives and those of their future students. For those who will shape the minds of the young, the process of bringing metacognition to the conscious level is necessary.

The Approach to the Challenge

What this program is attempting to do is use metacognition as a cord of interrelated threads throughout the degree program. The threads include exploration of self, the reflection of self as a means towards thoughtful choices, the movement of self from subject to object, and the placing of object into a system

The challenge is how to profuse the adult degree program with opportunities for learners to develop metacognitive abilities. The cohort structure with its sequential courses and group coherency offers opportunity for a deliberate developmental approach supported by a community of peers. The vast potential for curriculum growth is exciting but must be tempered by the realization that the dedicated faculty have many other commitments. Though faculty may be sensitive to the desirability to foster the metacognition, they are understandably concerned about providing their students with course content.

The plan is to develop metacognitive skills across the curriculum. The method needs to engage the faculty and further their professional development while limiting the number of meetings. Rather than the participatory democracy of department meetings or the autonomous ownership of an individual course's syllabus, a more directional but still receptive approach is used. A year long course, Learning about Learning, is developed and delivered by the cohort director.

All students in the program's dual strands take these metacognitive laden classes even though one strand is taking general education courses while the other strand is beginning major courses in elementary education. The primary goals of the Learn about Learning series is to progress adult learners (regardless of where they begin) forward in the developmental progress. The content used to stimulate this process enables learners to become co-creators of knowledge.

The Learn about Learning series is intended to enable students to reflectively experience the struggles and triumphs of learning by concurrently learning and watching themselves learn. These insights will also enable them to be more attuned to the learning experiences of the students they are observing and aspiring to teach (Brookfield, 1995). Learners are offered a wide variety of techniques to stimulate thinking about thinking and thinking about teaching. Many of these techniques are experienced in their classes and then analyzed (Cross & Angelo, 1988). The learners are being prepared to become mindful classroom researchers (Cross & Steadman,

1996) through frequent metacognitive analysis of the learning of themselves, their peers, and the elementary school students they observe.

Faculty teaching the content area classes meet together before the term begins for coordination of metacognitive (and other trans-disciplinary) skills, a few times during the term to share re-enforcement strategies, and at the end of the term for their own metacognition of the process. The progression is to develop learner's metacognition first through instructor designed examples and coaching, then with learner initiated self-conscious deliberation, and ultimately as an increasingly automatic process.

An enormously complex design project would be necessary to map and coordinate the density and direction of the major metacognitive strands under-girthing the program. Therefore, a more modest approach is used. Each faculty member develops the syllabus according to customary standards. The course syllabi are lined up in sequence with entry level courses on one side and first level major courses on the other. Running between these two blocks of courses is the narrow and continuous band of the Learn about Learning series. Each quilt segment has its own distinctive scheme which represents how the faculty member represents the discipline. What sews together the quilt pieces are the threads of metacognition which usually originate from the center strip and are applied in the content classes. These metacognitive threads are not embellishments to the content classes but visible representations of usually invisible expectations. This paper will explore only some means for reenforcing metacognitive and trans-disciplinary skills.

Writing as a Means of Metacognitive Development

As William Perry (1970) demonstrated decades ago, the teaching of reading and writing skills as a thinking process can transform how learners view themselves. Perry succeeded because he started teaching students at their level of knowledge and their way of understanding knowledge. By starting with the student's unease with the current situation, progress can begin in the cognitive process.

Since adults enter, or frequently reenter, higher education because of a perception of disequilibrium sufficient to motivate change, the exploration of this disquietude is a profitable starting point. Entering adult students are usually thrilled to have an opportunity to share their current thinking. A fruitful area of exploration is the juxtaposition between future personal and career aspirations, parallel recollections of past experiences, and present choices. Journal entries frequently begin as self-absorbed recollections of the writer's perception of personal experience. The voluntary sharing of journal selections provide students with affirmation of the importance of their own experience. The journals quickly move into using self as just one of many sources of pertinent information.

In the area of writing, accepting students where they are and moving them to further steps is especially complex. Anyone who has encouraged incoming students to write about themselves is faced with an ethical quandary. How does the teacher balance affirmation of the student's openness to share significant life experiences with the standards for quality writing? A teacher would demonstrate the height of insensitivity by defacing a student's first paper recounting domestic abuse, violence, or vulnerability with red marks correcting subject-verb agreement and sentence structure. Yet, unlike a therapist, faculty's alliance is not solely to the participant but also to the professional

standards of quality. The approach is to encourage the students to share experiences and perceptions as points in a process of self-directed growth. The faculty's role is to structure a developmental process that respects alternative viewpoints, disputes cliches and stereotypical views, cheers innovative thinking, encourages awareness of cognitive growth, and requires defensible conclusions. The fear students feel about exposing their possible error can be alleviated by a professor who acknowledges the danger, gives them permission to be fearful, and encourages learners to take the risk of asserting their viewpoints coupled with the responsibility for presenting a committed, substantiated position. (Liebler in Taylor, Marienau, Fiddler, 2000, p. 224)

Teaching has therapeutic qualities in the exploration of metacognition with the components of co-construction of stories, bearing witness, teaching, and role modeling. Each of these aspects is required for the student to be guided to the next destination. A developmental framework, frees the vulnerable learner from a sense of personal deficiency. Moving away from the need to hide one's own sense of inadequacy, the learner is able to begin moving towards reflecting on how one's own actions have influenced the course of one's life. Increasingly, the student is able to analyze her reactions, and alter her self-perception and interpersonal activity. By bearing witness to the stories of one another's life, the learning community contributes by linking past experiences with present options. What had been affective reactions to isolated incidents become predictable patterns with meaning. Reflecting on the specific meaning of an incident, places the reaction in a historical context. Brought to the conscious level, the reaction can be examined as to "What does this action mean to me?" and "How does this reaction relate to past experiences?" finally "How do I want to react in the future?"

A sense of achievement is felt when learners realizes that one can regulate one's reactions. Energy is channeled in desired directions. The metacognitive analysis of the meaning behind choices, allows examination and eventually selection of other options. The additional layer of metacognition, enables the learner to self-talk through a progression from "I am insecure because this situation is similar to youthful experiences where my initiative was met with humiliation" to "I have to choice to break the cycle and react differently now." The capacity to reflect on the connection between past, present, and future, enables the student to consciously select among a widening expansion of optional reactions.

Writing is discussed as a communications process in which the communicator is constantly making choices about what and how to write by analyzing the information and the parties involved in the communications. Through a series of exercises requiring students to write in the appropriate voice for different audiences, followed by peer role-playing, and metacognitive analysis of the responses, learners begin to realize the choices they have in their writing and in their life. For example, clear writing by removing the distracting static of non-standard English, enables the writer to better control what the reader is hearing. Only at this point, do students begin to think about what English teachers view as qualities of good writing. The student is moving from Stage 3 of understanding to Stage 4 of viewing oneself as a co-creator of meaning.

Meanwhile, the students are enrolled in another course - English 101 for entering students or Education 101 for transfer students. Having been introduced to the fundamentals of their courses, the faculty begin stimulating cross-course discussions. Standards for college level work are introduced in one course then expected in all others. Faculty, peers, and writer apply the criteria to course content using a scale adapted from Walvoord's Primary Trait-Based Scale for first year composition (Walvoord & Anderson, 1998, p.229-231). Peers also make editorial suggestions. Discussions address the difficulty of becoming detached sufficiently from one's own work to edit.

Meanwhile, the Education 101 faculty discusses the importance of precise communication with students, parents, and colleagues and how best to communicate what they are learning about learning from observations of elementary school students.

The use of journaling to engage an active learning process will continue in increasingly multi-dimensional areas such as mathematic journals as students take mathematic and mathematic methods courses (Walvoord & Anderson, p, 225). These standards are further reenforced the next term, when students are given criteria for writing science reports that incorporate the writing criteria previously discussed.

In the process learners are building their learning portfolio. The learner selects several works from each course. To encourage learners to think of learning as a continuous process, at least one work is from the first half of each course and at least one work from the last half of the course. As the writing criteria are applied across more disciplines and increasingly advanced classes, the student continues to submit works for the portfolio. Each submission is accompanied by a reflective paper, in which the learner explores what was learned and how this has changed perception of self, learning, and the teaching profession. In the process, learners are weaned away from evaluating themselves through the eyes of their teacher towards developing self-assessment and peer-assessment skills. They are learning how to sit beside themselves and discover what factors in their life they want to continue and what needs changing. Learning is seen as a continuous process. They are moving towards Stage 4.

Assessment

The program is taking preliminary steps towards combining "AAHE's Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning" (Walvoord & Anderson, 1998, p.189-191) along with adult development theory (Kegan, 1994). The process aims to develop an assessment process that fulfills the AAHE's criteria of effective assessment as: "reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time. . . . requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. . . . is ongoing, not episodic. . . . representatives from across the educational community. . . . illuminates questions that people really care about. . . part of a larger set of conditions that promote change (Walvoord & Anderson, p.189-191).

In the recent book, Developing Adult Learners, Taylor, Marienau, and Fiddler (2000) combined a list that proficient adult educators found indicated that learners were experiencing growth. The "Developmental Intentions Chart" illustrates that "development is marked by movement along five dimensions" which are "I. Toward knowing as a dialogical process," "II. Toward a dialogical relationship to oneself," "III.

Toward being a continuous learner." "IV. Toward self-agency and self-authorship," and "V. Toward connection with others" (p. 32-33). The introductory verb in all of these indicators of "towards" emphasizes the dynamic and open ended process of learning. Though one can never arrive, one can progress towards "knowing." The developmental process begins by moving beyond the self into a exchange with the other. This dialogue requires, that at least temporarily, one's own voice has to be silenced long enough to hear the other's ideas. The subsequent dialogue with oneself results in acknowledging and questioning one's own ideas and underlying assumptions. The resulting analytical framework enables the learner to see one's own perspective as one among many others.

Learning shifts from an emphasis on the acquisition of a required amount of knowledge to a continuous process, where learners will "take initiative; set our own goals and standards; use experts, institutions, and other resources to pursue these goals; take responsibility for our direction and productivity in learning" (Kegan, 1994, p. 303). By accepting the necessity for continuous learning, the developing adult is self-empowered to stop blindly accepting imposed standards and to instead accept the authority to author one's own life. The self-authorship does not necessarily transform the learner into the solo heroic traveler. Though early adult developmental theorists such as Freud, Erikson, and Levinson emphasized individual development, many current trends in adult development view the degree of individuality or community as yet another component of the dialogue process "*to mediate boundaries between one's connection to others and* one's individuality and to respect, value, and *engage the affective dimensions when confronting difference*" (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 200, p. 42). As the individualized tradition of American is shifting to the importance of teams, the respect for diverse people, and the reassessment of educational approaches valuing social interaction such as those of Vygotsky, the negotiation of individual and group values will become increasingly more important.

In a cohort, who work in the same school district and aspire to work as teachers in the same district, all of these skills are crucial. The learners need to change their self-perception as fulfillers of prescribed tasks to that of classroom managers who determines goals responsive to one's own, the schools, and the children's needs. As a member of a professional staff encouraged to transform a school district, they will need to work cooperatively while retaining their own integrity. All this, while negotiating their own self-perceptions as individuals, family, and community members.

Throughout the year, each learner selects a small number of writing samples for rewriting in a portfolio that displays the best achievements. Also included are writing from peers and faculty concerning how the learners has developed. At the end of the first year, after the student reads over the portfolio reflections, they writes a paper about how they have changed and changes they anticipate for the following year. The learners are reflecting on their own learning process, as a means of understanding themselves as learners and of becoming sensitized to the learning of children. Learners are informed that these yearly reflections will be used to evaluate their progress and the progress of the program. Since the reflections do not have students information (these are attached on a cover sheet), they can be copied for end of the year feedback and planning session.

Conclusion

Though this program is focused on developing the metacognitive skills of future teachers, the process is adaptable to adults preparing for careers in other professions. Though the specific content would change for adult students with other majors, the principles would remain the same. The ability to self-monitor and deliberately choose effective interpersonal strategies, known as emotional intelligences, are critical determinate for success (Goleman, 1998). Therefore, the metacognitive transformation, discussed in this paper, can similarly be addressed in other integrated curriculum development and assessment processes.

Long accepted by adult educators, metacognitive thinking is now shown to have a neurobiological basis. "Consciousness allows for the manipulation of representations in new combinations within working memory, the chalkboard of the mind. . . . Consciousness involving the linguistic system and autonoesis allows for reflection on the past and future, moving us beyond the lived moment. . . motivated [to] more strategically focused achievements that are not likely without the involvement of consciousness (Siegal, 1999, p. 269-70)

Deliberately engaging in metacognition stimulates growth in systemic thinking for students and faculty alike. In the process of considering overarching outcomes, the faculty become more informed adult educators. No longer only specialists in their narrow discipline, faculty come to view themselves also as a team whose goal is to stimulate a transformational process. The way they think about learning changes for their students and themselves.

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OUTCOMES AND QUALITY: ASSESSMENT IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

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Introduction

Quality in higher/adult education is difficult to pinpoint. As educators, we like to believe that quality education is obtained when the transfer of knowledge successfully occurs between educator and learner. However, this is only one aspect of the entire learning experience. Past measurements of educational quality have been weak and linear. These measurements usually consist of a survey or a form of classroom observation. I argue that the real key to measuring quality and achieving expected outcomes in the classroom is through new methods of assessment.

Tools and Methods of Assessment

According to the Principles of Good Practice, Principle 5 states "The assessment of a student's learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes" (p. 16, ACE) As adult educators, we are aware that assessment tools and methods come in many forms. In learning institutions and business alike these tools include and are not limited to oral and written exams, written exercises/projects, oral participation and presentations, written papers, oral/group exercises and projects. These tools are designed to access the transfer of knowledge from educator to learner. However, additional tools of assessment are utilized to measure the quality of the overall learning experience. Upon inquiring with different divisions in my own institution, two other institutions for higher learning in the Pittsburgh area and two businesses specifically selected(one manufacturing and one service) I found that learning experience assessment methods were quite similar. The tools from the institutions for higher learning are both qualitative and quantitative in the form of a questionnaire, some being more thorough than others. They were designed to provide feedback about the course structure, the course platform (online vs. face to face), faculty accessibility and student attitudes about the course/learning environment itself. The business assessments are qualitative performance evaluation forms and mainly deal with employee work ethic, on the job performance, employee relations and work environment.

In comparison to the educational assessments, an interesting component to the business assessments is that they are subjective – based on someone else's assessment of an individual's abilities to perform their job. One assessment was more updated than the other as it was assessing performance based on specific job skills. However, it was still reliant on another person's opinion of how well the skills were performed/mastered. The norm in the business world is a lack of objective assessment, however that is changing. I have discovered several objective assessment tools that are being implemented in the business environment. These assessments measure abilities in not only skill performance, but also decision making and analytical abilities. Jane Vella

asks the question "how do we know they know?" (p. 190, Vella). As practiced adult educators, we know that the answer to this question is that knowledge is demonstrated by "doing". It seems that businesses have picked up on this concept and are partnering with educators to develop measurements that are more objective and based on an individual's competency rather than someone else's opinion of their abilities. Some of these tools/methods that were designed for the educational environment and are now being adopted by businesses to more accurately assess their employee's skills and areas for improvement. These assessments are realistic simulations of tasks performed on the job. One such assessment called SimNet is an interactive simulation designed to assess ability with the software application Microsoft Office 2000. It places the user in the actual software environment and then prompts the user to perform a task. The user is assessed based on their response to the task – where they point and click the mouse.

Another interesting tool that employers are adopting is a product put out by Development Dimensions International (DDI) called Web-Screen™. This is a web-based qualifying, screening and reporting tool to assist employers in the selection of qualified candidates. Applicants apply for a position online, however in addition to completing an application form, they are also given a job and company preview, a series of questions about their basic qualifications, a motivational profile and a competency-based screening (pp. 1-2, DDI). Once the applicant has completed this process, "(they) are given esteem-maintaining feedback. Qualified candidates are then automatically prompted to continue, and the system allows (employers) to communicate interest to hot prospects." (p. 2, DDI)

Companies are embracing these new forms of assessment. According to Employment Review Online, "companies spent more than $15 billion on electronic recruiting in 1999, a number predicted to rise to $40 billion by 2003" (July, 2000). This article went on to say that "this process is more efficient and less time consuming than other evaluation methods. Assessments help determine which individuals have the skills required for the position and which do not, so firms do not waste time on unqualified applicants" (July, 2000).

There are several other articles about these types of assessment tools and their adoption by businesses worldwide. Therefore, my question is, if this is what our students will be facing upon graduation from our institutions, are we making practical use of these newly emerging types of assessment to fully prepare our students for these kinds of challenges? With the tools at our fingertips, the adoption of technology-based assessments could not only provide more accurate feedback on learning outcomes, they could also serve as a measurement for learning experience quality. Rather than utilizing two different methods and instruments for assessment, we could create tools that can measure both outcomes and quality simultaneously. The next twelve to eighteen months should be monitored closely as more of these new assessment methods emerge and institutions for higher learning and business alike evaluate their effectiveness and application.

A completed copy of this paper will be distributed to the attendees of this session.

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TRANSFORMATIONAL EDUCATION THROUGH THE CONVERGENCE OF CREATIVITY, CARE, COURAGE AND COMMUNITY

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Two years ago I received an MBA from North Park University. I had ventured back to school, following the conclusion of 20 years marriage, in an effort to discover the road signs that would point me in the direction of the fulfilled life that seemed to have eluded me. Like Dorothy, the Kansas farm girl, I was longing for that place over the rainbow, where the dreams that I dared to dream could come true. The MBA education was the entry point to my journey through OZ.

The journey to OZ is a metaphor that holds the images necessary to describe the elements that constitute success in higher education. To be successful teachers of adult learners, we must become wizards. My use of the term "Wizard" refers to the state of the transformed human being that, having undergone personal transformation, can indicate the path to others. By more fully examining Dorothy's adventures following her encounter with Professor Marvel, we can better understand the qualities of true Wizardry.

Each of us has our Kansas, that gloomy place where life's day to day monotony (numbs our thinking so that we see only the blacks, whites and grays of the universe around us. We've also had opportunities to visit OZ, generally via the chaotic turmoil of life that impacts us much like the tornado hit Dorothy. But before we ride the tornado we must have a glimpse of the rainbow – that which provides hope and allows us to begin the journey. Paulo Freire in Pedagogy of Hope (1994, p. 9) writes,

> Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle. But without the struggle, hope, as an ontological need, dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness. And hopelessness can become tragic despair. Hence the need for a kind of education in hope.....One of the tasks of the progressive educator....is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be. After all, without hope there is little we can do. The essential thing is this: hope, as an ontological need, demands an anchoring in practice. As an ontological need, hope needs practice in order to become historical concreteness.

When teachers break through the paradigmatic paralysis and ingrained thought patterns of adult learners allowing them to experience and trust in the reality of hope, students have the opportunity to ride the tornado and discover the majestic technicolor within their own lives and in the world around them. However, as S.D. Brookfield states in Developing Critical Thinkers (1987, p. 91),

> the right to challenge someone must be earned. People will come to develop trust in the person challenging them only after observing that,

over a reasonably long period, that the person's behaviors match his or her words.

One year after completing my MBA, North Park invited me back to teach Human Resources Management in its Degree Completion Program. Most of my students have been out in the work world long enough to question the plausibility of the management approaches of experts like W. Edwards Deming. Even when they are not vocal in their argument in favor of more traditional approaches, I see the cynicism and disillusionment in their eyes. Perhaps the greatest challenge that I have as an educator is to rekindle hope and stand as an example as a professional who continues to be buffeted by corporate America but whose hope is not diminished. Indeed, I must point to examples where I myself have been successful. No easy task.

Dorothy's belief in the authenticity of Professor Marvel sends her out into the storm that separates her from her reality and hurls her into the process of self- discovery. In Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Guide to Improving Instruction and Increasing Learner Achievement, R.J. Wlodkowski (1985, p. 132) observes,

> the essence of a challenge is risk and the possibility of failure.... To ask a learner to take a risk is to ask that person to make a deliberate personal encounter with the unknown.

When Dorothy opens the door following her turbulent ride, streams of color and light forewarn us that Dorothy is about to venture forth where no one from Kansas had ever gone before. All is not sunlight and flowers, however, for only shortly after getting acquainted with the Munchkins and Glinda, the good witch, Dorothy meets the Wicked Witch. The encounter serves as a reminder that, in spite of the ruby red slippers that sparklingly remind her that she does contain the power and knowledge for the journey, finding her way home will not be without its trials. The effective teacher will also find ways to run reality checks with students as they examine new ways of thinking and acting. Only through continued discourse with reality can new approaches take root and grow.

As trust builds and hope grows, a broader spectrum of insight into the self is available. As Dorothy skips down the yellow brick road she becomes acquainted with more dimensions of her humanity. For students to gain maximum benefit from their educational experience, educators must allow for episodes of searching for heart, brain, courage and home. When the teacher has enabled students to do a thorough self-examination and find the scarecrow's brain (critical thinking), the Tinman's heart (care & compassion), the Lion's nerve (courage) and Dorothy's home (community), the state of true wizardry can fully emerge.

Creativity, Care, Courage, and Community are the fundamental arenas of human experience in which classroom exploration must take place before students have the ability to click together the heels of their ruby red slippers and find the way home to the genuine self and the essence of life within the context of work, family and community. It is only in crossing over to the unknown, as Dorothy did in her passage to OZ, that these qualities can be nurtured.

Creativity

To experience transformation, the student must be required to stand in the tension between the vision and the current reality of the day-to-day situation. Robert Fritz (The Path of Least Resistance, 1984) tells us that it is only through the combination of constant attention to the external current reality and inner diligence in visioning possible futures that true creativity is released. Dorothy's encounter with the scarecrow, as she proceeds to the Emerald City, provides vivid imagery of creativity in action. She meets the scarecrow on the road to the Emerald City. The scarecrow informs her that he is tired of being a fool and would like to have a brain instead of a head stuffed with straw. However, it is the foolish scarecrow that comes up with the "out of box" thinking that gets Dorothy and her pals out of numerous scrapes and keeps them on the road to find the wizard. He plays the professorial role within the group. Knowing that he is a fool, he does not mind being called foolish! As he travels down the yellow brick road he stumbles, trips and falls, but only laughs at his awkwardness. His foolishness unleashes his creativity. He does not let his current reality block his vision of "braininess". Unwittingly, he is the brains of the operation! How fortunate for Dorothy that the scarecrow is the first of the travelers to be encountered, for without the willingness to risk, the remainder of the journey cannot take place.

As an MBA student there were countless times when I refrained from participating or offering a solution for fear of appearing foolish in front of my fellow students. In many of those instances I realized that I actually did have information that would have assisted the rest of the class in understanding the problem at hand. One of my professors started singling me out, and however embarrassed I might have been, without his help I would not have taken the risk that provided the full benefit of my educational experience. Now as a teacher of adult learners I am convinced that to be successful I will have to find avenues for creating an environment that drives out fear. Students will then be able to risk being seen in their current state.

In The Heart Aroused, Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America (1994, p103), David Whyte discusses the foolishness of creativity.

> Anyone not prepared to look a little foolish now and again would be better not starting this path. Any artist or manager worth their salt must be prepared to do bad art or be prepared to fail at a planned goal now and again. It is the same spirit that is called on when we brainstorm ideas, where no image or conception is off limits.

The same is true in the classroom. Teachers need to put effort into learning and exercising techniques that remove the fear that keeps students from participating and offering their insights. In my recent Individual and Group Behavior class, a student named Frank, would sit back with arms folded across his chest while other students struggled to resolve a hypothetical situation. Occasionally he would make a contribution, but would not carry out his suggestion to its logical conclusion, which more times than not would have resolved the dilemma for the group. I would point this out to the class, each time this happened hoping it

would give Frank the courage to openly risk his input in future situations. I know that if some day another instructor is able to release Frank from his fear .....Stand back world, HERE COMES FRANK!
Whyte uses the symbols of fire and flame to depict the creative process (page 80).

> By understanding this essential and ancient relationship of creativity and fire, and attempting to speak from and live with the flame of personal passion, there is a possibility of understanding how difficult yet how magnificent the creative path of any individual can be, even within the confines of an organization.

The scarecrow tells Dorothy that his greatest fear is the flame of a match. Just as much as he longs for the creative spark of life, he likewise fears being consumed by the flame. Whyte indicates (page 85) that we fear that our flaws may be revealed to others or that we may lose the work relationships which sustain us through risky creative action and the burning away of surface appearances. Is it not interesting that it is only when the scarecrow risks catching fire that the wicked witch (or those things which prevent us from actualizing our full potential) is destroyed? The water meant to douse his flame melts the witch and ends her evil reign. The scarecrow is transformed. Whyte (page 115) concludes :"When we walk into the flames ourselves .... we fuel the transformation of ordinary, everyday forms into the exquisite and the rare."

Is this not the role of the transformational educator? To cultivate the everyday into the extraordinary? For it is from those daily life experiences that we learn our most important life lessons. Robert Fritz (The Path of Least Resistance, 1984, p 63) tells us, "Only from the knowledge of current reality can you build a foundation for the future".

When students plummet their own depths, see the awesome beauty and potential that resides there, and bring to the surface their understandings based on real world experiences, true learning takes place. In my opinion, one cannot a successful teacher be if the ability to extract the rare from the ordinary is not present.

Care

Educators need to cultivate within their students the ability to face situations with an open mind and a compassionate heart. Peter Senge (The Fifth Discipline, The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization,1990, p 171) emphasizes the thought that the higher the degree of openness that develops in a learner, the greater the connectedness to others and the greater the sense of compassion.

> We are used to thinking of compassion as an emotional state, based on our concern for one another. But it is also grounded in a level of awareness. In my experience, as people see more of the systems within which they operate, and as they understand more clearly the pressures influencing one another, the naturally develop more compassion and empathy.

> Compassion may be a passionate way of living born of an awareness of the interconnectedness of all creatures by reason of their common Creator. ... Compassion is our kinship with the universe and the universe's Maker; it is the action we take because of that kinship (Matthew Fox, A Spirituality Named Compassion, 1979, p 34).

The character in the OZ story, who represents this quality is the Tin woodsman. He journeys with both Dorothy and the scarecrow in hopes of receiving a heart from the great Wizard. The Tinman is empty, having neither heart nor brain. Having had both at one time in his past, he tells the scarecrow that what he longs for most is a heart, for he has never been happier than when he was in love. His heart has been awakened to the wonders of love.

On the road to OZ he accidentally steps on a beetle and kills it. The Tin Woodsman is so distraught that he weeps tears of sorrow and regret until his hinges are rusted shut. It is as though his missing heart has been awakened. Dorothy must use the oil can on his jaw hinges so that he can speak again. The story then reveals that thereafter he walks very carefully, with his eyes on the road, so as not to harm any living creature. Because he has no heart he takes great care never to be cruel or unkind to anything. He says,"You people with hearts have something to guide you and need never do wrong; but I have no heart, and so I must be very careful. When OZ gives me a heart of course I needn't mind so much."

It is the Tinman who shows the greatest concern over even the slightest misfortune that befalls the group. He is their soul. If the scarecrow has the IQ, the Tinman has the EQ (Emotional Quotient - a concept used by Daniel Goleman in Emotional Intelligence, 1995).

So what does it really mean to wake minds to the connectedness that activates compassion? We allow students to see that their growth and emergence into the world, as creators and builders of the future, comes not from their individual encounters with moments of wisdom, but from their corporate experiences as a learning unit. Many of my professors in the MBA programs organized students in to teams to work on case studies or other problem solving exercises. We depended on each other to come up with the final product. Each of us discovered the power of diversity and the richness of our combined efforts.

Every time I start a new class I remind the group that while my role may be that of teacher, they are in the class to learn from each other and to benefit from both individual and shared breakthroughs. I also let them know that I expect to learn from them as well. We practice Active Listening. We assist each other in reflecting on our successes and errors. We learn the importance of giving valuable feedback – we learn together. In the class that I taught this spring, when any member of the group was absent, the other individuals in the class were conscious of the impact on the group. There was a deep sense of connectivity and a compassionate bond developed as the group struggled and grew together. Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1970,p 61) describes that process.

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of –the students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches,

but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught can also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow.

Success in adult education depends on the extent to which the learner moves beyond personal boundaries and demonstrates compassionate involvement with the wider community of learners.

Courage

Each man had only one genuine vocation - to find the way to himself...His task was to discover his own destiny - not an arbitrary one - and live it out wholly and resolutely within himself (Herman Hesse as quoted in Synchronicity, the Inner Path of Leadership, Joseph Jaworksi,1996, p 73).

The word "courage" beautifully portrays this search for authenticity. It points to the struggle involved in knowing, loving, and being the self. Paul Tillich, a world-renowned theologian, wrote his book, The Courage to Be (1952, p 181) on this topic,"Courage is an ethical reality, but it is rooted in the whole breadth of human existence and ultimately in the structure of being itself." Tillich tells us that courage has revealing power. He explains that the courage to be is the key to being itself. Without great courage we cannot become our essence. Essence comes before being, but being is not a given. We must be willing to accept our essence before we can become it.

Learners must learn to listen to their own inner truth. The next step is to accept it and become committed to following the path that flows from it. I know of no other way to practice ethical behavior. The figure of the cowardly lion represents the battle that rages within each of us. It is a battle against becoming who we are truly born to be. The symbol of the powerful lion is used to underscore the need for authentic courage. It is that level of courage that is required to wrestle with our own very personal demons that block us from self-acceptance and keep us from being effective learners.

When Dorothy and her friends first meet the Lion, he attacks the smallest and most helpless of the lot, Dorothy's little dog, Toto. I think many of us have observed cowardly educators whose cynicism and arrogance keep them from hearing and benefiting from student contributions. Those same teachers at times appear to enjoy intimidating students with their all knowing posture and academic certitude. Is it not obvious that these pedagogical tyrants are the most inauthentic and likely suffer the greatest self-doubt. Dorothy scolds the Lion for being such a coward. He admits that he is. When Dorothy asks him why, he responds that he was probably born that way.

Whenever I've met a man I've been awfully scared; but I just roared at him, and he has always run away as fast as he could go. If the elephants and tigers and the bears had ever tried to fight me, I should have run myself -- I'm such a coward; but just as soon as they hear me roar they all try to get away from me, and of course I let them go.

The Lion is at war with his inner nature. In How to Want What You Have,

Timothy Miller (1995, p 1) quotes Albert Camus: " If there is a sin against life, it consists perhaps not so much in despairing of life as in hoping for another live and in eluding the implacable grandeur of this life".

This cowardly lion is indeed the King of the Beasts. Those who encounter him respect his magnificence. He does not believe in the grandeur of his own being. He has actually convinced himself that he has tricked those that he fears into being afraid of him! The lion is unaware of how contradictory his thinking is. Nathaniel Branden in The Art of Living Consciously (1997, p 26), indicates that we undermine our self-esteem when we persist in our contradictions, because at a deeper level we really know what we are doing. The lion is suffering from a severe case of poor self-esteem!

In spite of the poor fellow's self-declared cowardice, he plays the role of protector and defender of the team. The lion defends the team as it is confronted by all sorts of ferocious creatures on the road to OZ. When he finally realizes the critical role that he is playing on the team, he chooses to be the great lion that he is. He knows who he is. He can be who he is. In accepting his true nature, the lion is no longer afraid - he is the embodiment of courage. He accepts his rightful role of leadership as The King of the Beasts.

Stephen Brookfield (The Skillful Teacher,1990, p 64) describes the Authentic Teacher.

> Authentic Teachers are, essentially, those that students feel they can trust. They are also those whom students see as real flesh-and-blood human beings with passions, frailties, and emotions. They are remembered as whole persons, not as people who hide behind a collection of learned role behaviors appropriate to college teaching. In more specific terms, students see four behaviors as evidence of authenticity: (1) teachers' words and actions are congruent; (2) teachers admit to error, acknowledge fallibility, and make mistakes in full public view of learners; (3) teachers allow aspects of their personhood outside their role as teachers to be revealed to students; and (4) teachers respect learners by listening carefully to students' expressions of concern, by taking care to create opportunities for students' voices to be heard, and by being open to changing their practice as a result of students' suggestions.

Community

Peter Senge (The Fifth Discipline, 1990, p 171) states that "genuine commitment is always to something larger than ourselves and is guided by a sincere desire to serve the world." Senge also points out that when individuals are committed to a vision beyond their self-interest, they find that they have energy not available when pursuing narrower goals. "The will of a person committed to a larger purpose is like a cry from the soul which has been shaken and awakened."

It has been said that no man is an island. Hillary Rodham Clinton says that it takes a village. Little Dorothy Gale says, "There's no place like home."

Unlike the friends she meets throughout her adventures in OZ, Dorothy is blessed with intelligence. She is loving and kind. And no one would argue the point that she has tremendous courage! But still she is lost. She says to the

scarecrow: "No matter how dreary and gray our homes are, we people of flesh and blood would rather live there than in any other country, be it ever so beautiful. There is no place like home."

To which the scarecrow replies, "Of course I cannot understand your point of view. If your heads were stuffed with straw, like mine, you would probably all live in the beautiful places, and then Kansas would have no people at all. It is fortunate for Kansas that you have (brains)."

Bingo! Again the scarecrow has hit the nail on its head. We humans, if we allow ourselves to be fully human, are connected to something much greater than ourselves. It has given us life, and in turn we long to give back, we desire to serve.

Senge (page 170) clarifies this human need by describing the learning process of children.

> The learning process of the young child (Dorothy?) provides a beautiful metaphor for the learning challenge faced by us all: to continually expand our awareness and understanding, to see more and more of the interdependencies between actions and our reality, to see more and more of our connectedness to the world around us. We will probably never perceive fully the multiple ways in which we influence our reality. But simply being open to the possibility is enough to free our thinking.

Senge goes on to quote Einstein who expressed the challenge to growth when he said,

> (the human being) experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of our consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Einstein has described Dorothy's challenge. Her journey to OZ allows her to break free of her prison, where nasty old women pick on sweet little dogs; encounter the mystery, horror and beauty of life; free herself from her self-image as the victimized orphan; and return to Kansas to fully be the intelligent (scarecrow), loving (tinman), and courageous (lion) child that she is. (As every good Jungian knows, the latent desires of her dreamtime companions are her own unexpressed thoughts and needs.)

She returns as one who is prepared to serve - she has entered the true realm of wizardry (transformational leadership). When leaders reach this plateau, how do they foster a climate so that others can participate in the journey? Senge (page 172) suggests that to be the guide on such a journey, the leader must build an environment where it is safe for people to create visions,

where inquiry and commitment to the truth are the norm, and where challenging the status quo is expected. He says,

> The core leadership strategy is simple: be a model. Commit yourself to your own personal mastery. Talking about personal mastery may open people's minds somewhat, but actions always speak louder than words. There's nothing more powerful you can do to encourage others in their quest than to be serious in your own quest.

The message clearly speaks to transformational educators. Walk the talk. Be your being.

So how do we conclude our story? Do you recall what happens after the famous quartet completes their successful adventure and the wicked witch is dead? They return to the Emerald City and discover that the great OZ, the one who has sent them forth on their quest to " be their being", is just an ordinary man. Dorothy, in her disappointment, accuses him of being a very bad man. He replies that he is a very good man, but a very bad wizard. I disagree.

The wizard had a great understanding of the human condition. He set Dorothy and her friends out on the hero's journey that allowed them to return victorious, not only with the witch's broom, but with a sense of self that included what they had been searching for all along. He allowed them to discover themselves. I want to apply Howard Haas's (The Leader Within,1992, p 71) definition of the leader to the transformational teacher:

> The leader (transformational teacher) is an ordinary practitioner with some special insights. Leaders (Transformational teachers) are ordinary people that have been forged and shaped on the anvil of reality who like what they see and seek new insights about themselves and about the possibilities and promise of the future. They, in fact, are the creators of their own reality.....leaders (transformational teachers) are creators of change because they in fact have changed themselves.

By allowing others to realize their full potential, the Wizard himself becomes a true Wizard. He reaches his own full potential. He no longer needs the illusions of magic to create the impressions of Wizardry. He is a free man. He climbs in his balloon, fully being the disheveled little man that he is, and sets sail for Omaha, a place not far from Kansas.

Perhaps due to my years working in corporate America, Peter Senge's work regarding the "Learning Organization" continues to speak to me. Senge (page 14) understands what true learning is all about.

> Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we become able to do something we never were able to do. Through learning we re-perceive the world and our relationship to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create, to be a part of the generative process of life. There is within each of us a deep hunger for this type of learning.

Coming home is the conclusion of the hero's journey. Home is the seat of the fully realized self who having been on the journey can point the way to others. Success in adult education requires no less.

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YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY BABY: THE ROOTS AND RENAISSANCE OF COHORT-BASED ACCELERATED LEARNING

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Outstanding growth and success characterize the first twenty-three years of accelerated, cohort-based learning in adult higher education. The authors reflect on their individual and collaborative experiences with teaching and researching this form of adult education. These programs which began during the late 1970's, are now pervasive, influential forms of higher education developed specifically for adult learners. This paper examines the underlying philosophy for how and why we do what we do with this group of learners. A conceptual framework (Mealman, 1991a) provides a model through which adult learning in cohort-based, accelerated programs can be viewed for curriculum development, faculty and staff development and for learning outcomes assessment. Underlying theoretical frameworks include adult learning (Lindeman, 1926; Freire, 1970; Knowles, 1980; Mezirow, 1991); experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Jarvis, 1987); and collaborative learning, (Bergevin and McKinley, 1967; Bruffee, 1993).

Cohort-based accelerated learning is defined in this paper as undergraduate and graduate degree programs which consider the unique learning and developmental needs of working adults. These programs which are highly concentrated, intensive and of shorter duration than traditional academic majors make extensive use of collaborative learning. Students are organized into small groups of peers who remain together for the duration of their course work.

We invite readers and participants to interactively and reflectively examine the assumptions about learning, and explore the potential for further development of teaching and learning strategies for enhanced adult learning opportunities and outcomes in the third decade of program delivery.

Roots

Accelerated adult learning programs, (also referred to as field experience programs and degree completion programs), are rooted in the Open University and University Without Walls movements. They began to emerge in the United States in the mid-late 1970's as a way to meet the needs of adult learners who had interrupted their education due to work, family or financial reasons and now felt the need to complete their baccalaureate degree. Many of these adults were professionals in business, healthcare, law enforcement, etc. who were seeking career advancement. Due to the heavy demands of work and family responsibilities, they were unable to attend traditional university programs that required them to be in class during daytime hours, two to three times a week. The early program developers saw a market niche. They would offer classes one night a week or on weekends in locations convenient to students' homes or places of employment. Classes were often held in hotel conference rooms and other locations, which allowed the colleges and universities to expand their geographic base. Books were delivered to the classroom to eliminate the students having to drive to the campus.

A main goal of these early programs was to develop practical skills in leadership and management that would have immediate application to the workplace. The classroom was seen as a laboratory where students could develop and practice these skills. A secondary goal was to develop interpersonal skills for self -development. One such program, the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Behavioral Sciences program (BAABS) at National College of Education (now National-Louis University) established in 1978, listed the following programmatic goals:

- To improve and further develop interpersonal and leadership skills
- Written and oral communication skills
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Understanding of the research process and its application
- Self-knowledge and self-image
- Learner independence and self-reliance

A major assumption guiding the development of these adult learning programs was that this student population was experience rich and theory poor. Unlike the traditional age student who might learn theory and apply it at some future time, adult students brought practical knowledge into the classroom. The theory served as a bridge for understanding the meaning of their experience. Instructors were to be "facilitators" who encouraged the learners to bring their experiences into the classroom to help illuminate the theoretical concepts. To complete the learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) students were given assignments to apply what they were learning in an organizational setting. Programs often included an applied research project where learners identified and analyzed an organizational problem and designed and implemented a systematic plan to create change or alleviate the problem.

Courses were outcome oriented and competency-based. They were organized into modular units that were integrative in nature and built upon one another. Students completed the courses together in the same order, as a single unit or cohort group.

One feature that is still a major part of most adult degree programs today is prior learning assessment. It was assumed that in the intervening years between formal education, adults continued to learn informally through their varied experiences and that these experiences were often equivalent to what is taught in a college course. Students had the opportunity to earn credit for these experiences through the development of a portfolio where they wrote essays and provided other documentation of their learning. The portfolio served two purposes. First, it provided a way for students to earn credit toward their degree without taking additional course work. Since the portfolio was to be completed concurrently with the required course work, it was theoretically possible to earn two years of college credit in one year. Secondly, the portfolio provided a vehicle for students to validate their experiences and provided direction for further career development. This aspect of the process was so strongly valued that in the early years of the BAABS program, the portfolio was required of all students as part of one of their courses regardless of whether they needed to earn the additional credit.

The students who participated in these programs were assumed to be middle to upper level managers who were academically prepared to complete upper division college level work, highly motivated and self-directed. Learners were recruited from corporations, many of whom offered tuition reimbursement. Due to reduced seat-time (about half of that of a traditional course), learners were expected to complete the same amount of reading in a shorter time frame as well as engage in independent and group

activities outside of class. While they usually took only one class at a time, the work was often intense and demanding. Most students undertook this workload while holding full time jobs, and many also had responsibilities for children and/or aging parents.

As the popularity of adult degree programs grew, the population of students expanded and became more racially and ethnically diverse. In addition to career professionals, other adults recognized this form of learning as meeting their educational needs. As Houle had discovered in 1961, adults were motivated to pursue education as a means to a larger end, such as a career change, for social interaction and for the love of learning. Women who had interrupted both career and education to raise their children felt a need to upgrade their skills. As "lifelong learning" came into vogue, learners of all ages were looking for personal fulfillment. Some came as a result of a divorce, job loss or other life-changing event. Students came from small social service agencies and large urban centers. Many students came in with writing skills that were not up to college level, which prompted institutions to provide learning assistance to these students.

Students were encouraged to form a learning community from the very beginning. In the BAABS program, the students met before the first class to mutually decide on a meeting night for their program. They elected a class representative who would be a liaison to the faculty and administration for student concerns.

While the early program developers recognized the benefits of creating a supportive learning community with the cohort approach, their focus was primarily on meeting enrollment goals and retention. The actual benefits of the cohort model for knowledge construction, individual and community development had yet to be realized.

Conceptual Framework

The adult accelerated degree completion program is a growing, living entity. Like any ecosystem, all characteristics provide essential matter, synergistically serving the whole. While the conceptual model contains certain components, it is the adult learners and facilitators who contribute to the unique experiences in a particular context. The function of program planners, administrators, recruiters, and faculty is to nurture this living organism and facilitate its growth and development. Our collective role is to learn, join and understand our function as one element of the organism. As one examines one's teaching practice, he or she can use this conceptual framework as a basis for reflection. Program planners can also have a road map to guide assessment, evaluation and revision. The accelerated, cohort-based model is comprised of seven components: (1) Students' Experiences; (2) Acceleration; (3) Cluster Phenomena; (4) Application; (5) Integration; (6) Theory to Practice; (7) Facilitation.

(1) Students' Experience

Adults have unique biographies which significantly impact and influence the educational and learning process. In fact, it is this rich resource of students' experiences which is the heart of the living organism. Each brings his or her own educational biography (learning how to learn skills, learning styles and educational histories) which influences how one learns in any given environment. Educators must consider these experiences which challenge the student to grow and stretch as they implement and facilitate programs.

Along with biographies, adult students have current experiences which serve to contextualize the learning throughout a program's time frame. Work, family, leisure, social and personal experience, woven tightly like a rope all influence any educational undertaking (Mealman 1991b).

(2) Acceleration

The most widely advertised aspect of adult degree completion programs is the amount of time (both traditional "seat time" and program length). While there is strong evidence that the advertised program length captures the adult students' attention and motivation for timely education, the assumptions which underlie the concept of acceleration are significantly deeper when one examines them more carefully.

Focused commitment, laboratory climate, seminar structure, intensity and students' heightened states of awareness all contribute to the acceleration process.

Students hold each other accountable for weekly contributions and rely on each other. Students are expected to not only read the material but also contribute examples for reflective examination and discussion.

One key component to accelerated learning is laboratory experience which is rooted in the human potential movement and the National Training Laboratories of the seventies, as well as the belief that students learn experientially. Class sessions include simulations and case studies from student work settings and from their lived experiences. Additionally, the shared experience of the group as it is developed over the program period constitutes content which is utilized in reflection and action research. Issues and concerns that arise in class among the learners as part of the normal educational experience are consistently examined and reflected upon, establishing models for students to use in their own organizations.

Students report a level of intensity that is created by the weekly educational process. The educational experience is similar to the metaphor of the pressure cooker. The raw food or materials which are all the organic elements that are part of the education experience (students' experiences, curriculum structure, readings, assignments and applied summary papers) are thrown into the pot. The heat (deadlines, faculty and students' expectations) is turned up to the point that the pressure gage rattles at a pace sustainable for optimal learning.

(3) Application

Application is central to the adult learning process. While prior and current experience provide much of the context for new learning, anticipated or future experience is highly valued by the adult student. In fact, it is one major motivator for returning to school. Learners want to know how this new learning will be relevant, how it will help them in new situations and how the degree will advance their careers. They also want to be challenged and grow as persons. The adult student has an eye toward what's behind the next bend in the river. "Where will this education lead?", is a frequent question. That mysterious question opens one up for anticipation and anxiety about the future. Course assignments such as applied projects were designed to stretch students in new and unexplored territory.

(4) Integration

The integration component of the framework resembles a southwestern woven tapestry with strands of fiber connecting what appear to be discrete parts. After further

examination and from studying the underside one can see the complex overlap that ties the beautiful piece together. Students' normal learning process includes naturally integrating new material with ones prior experience. While this seems obvious, the educational implications are many. The set of pre-determined courses often are linked conceptually. The order of courses was established to allow for material to flow and build. For many students, the names of courses become meaningless since they experience the program as a whole, rather than as individual courses facilitated in unconnected ways. Within the course curriculum, activities are woven together and often transcend the usual boundaries of discrete courses. Requiring applied summary papers in nearly all courses, whereby students address primary learning outcomes and apply concepts to personal and professional contexts, serves to intentionally foster the integration of knowledge. Many program requirements contain an individual or collaborative capstone project, that transcends and is woven into the curricular design of individual courses. These assignments provide immense opportunities to integrate the major learning outcomes and apply them in culturally and contextually relevant and meaningful ways.

(5) Cluster phenomena

It is not an accident that groups of learners in accelerated degree programs were formed as cohorts. Team learning, participative management practices, team building, collaboration and partnering were and are major organizational trends. Much of the learning occurs at a relational level where students learn from each other. Mealman (1991b) found that both intentional and incidental learning were prized by students, expanding the boundaries and scope of expected traditional learning. The fullness of learning could not be determined ahead of time due to the primary relational and developmental nature of the process. The collaborative knowledge of the group regarding shared learning outcomes, internal group process issues and concerns, incidental learning from students' stories and life happenings, self-disclosure, group dynamics and group history provide the fundamental building blocks for cohort development.

(6) Theory to Practice

It is assumed that students bring a vast reservoir of practical and experiential knowledge to the learning environment. This knowledge base is often overlooked, under-utilized, and under valued by academics (Burnard, 1987). They also have, in most cases, formed theoretical knowledge or "theories-in-use" as identified by Argyris and Schon, (1974). However, they often cannot name, articulate or critically examine their espoused theories. The classroom or educational context provides them with an opportunity to put names to "theories-in-use" expanding the range of knowing from the practical to the theoretical. This reflective, action research oriented process allows students access to the sometimes dense theoretical literature available. Students are encouraged to examine the vast array of theoretical material and place theories discovered from their own experience along side those presented in the formal course readings and assignments. This allows for an open culture whereby, intellectual concepts can be examined, understood and critiqued.

(7) Facilitation

Many students and instructors are attracted to accelerated, cohort based programs where teachers are co-learners, whose role it is to establish, foster, and maintain a climate for learning which utilizes the strengths and expertise of all members. Facilitators who have been described as artists, gardeners, conductors and midwives are expected to model life long learning, reflective thinking and critical reflection. Observing, learning, empathic listening and providing feedback are requirements for effective teaching. The collective group of facilitators assigned to a cohort is responsible for initially establishing and maintaining a climate conducive for optimal learning. The cohort eventually shares the responsibility for this function of group learning. The facilitator selects learning activities and negotiates those with the cohort. Each must be willing to adjust or modify learning activities to fit the needs of the group and the individual learners. This expanded role calls upon the teacher to not only serve as a traditional content expert, but to draw forth, connect, challenge, intervene and to integrate learning.

Philosophical Assumptions

While accelerated learning models seriously consider the contemporary lives of adults in their scheduling and overall format options, it is the major philosophical and pedagogical assumptions that underlie cohort learning which makes it continue to be so successful and vibrant as a learning opportunity in today's higher education market. Assumptions that are examined below relate to experiential learning, collaborative learning, dialogic learning, and multiple ways of knowing.

Assumption 1: Adults' experience is a rich resource for learning (Knowles, 1980). Building a learning community that capitalizes on the strengths of all of its members is critical. The richness of diversity must be tapped to assist the learning group in moving beyond regional, to national and global awareness.

Assumption 2: Learner's experience is at the heart of the curricular design. Program goals and objectives are learner centered. What evolves out of a learning group process cannot be pre-determined but flows out of the participation in the learning process.

Adults bring rich stocks of experiences with them into the learning environment. These experiences often represent different perspectives, expertise and worldviews. Differences due to race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family life and work environment contribute to the diversity of the community. In a cohort, people get to know each other. When they are encouraged listen deeply to each other and to enter into another's world, they are able to fill in gaps in their understanding. The opportunities for learning are multiplied. As participants relate their experiences, those experiences become the text for learning as much as the theorists in the assigned reading. By looking through the different lenses of classmates, (Lawrence, 1996; Lawrence and Mealman, 1996) group participants can begin to understand ways of knowing they may never have considered. One student related:

> The stories were just great. People would talk about how it [course content] applied to this and how it applied to that . . . nurses would talk about how it

happened in the nursing profession . . . it gave me a perspective of what that culture was like, because you tend to live in your own culture.

Through the relating of experiences and interaction, participants discover that there are many ways of approaching and expressing learning. When students are encouraged to share their work through oral presentation, others become aware that there are many different ways of approaching the same topic. Often a complex subject can be very understandable when it is presented from a perspective that someone with a different learning style may not have considered.

Assumption 3: Collaboration and collaborative learning are part of the foundation of the cohort approach. Collaboration needs to be intentionally fostered early in the life of the cohort and nurtured throughout the program experience.

Assumption 4: Faculty members of all courses in the curriculum need to have a knowledge base and understanding of collaborative learning to be more effective as teachers and facilitators.

It is not assumed that a group of strangers entering a cohort will automatically become a learning community. Community building must be carefully attended to by designing experiences to help participants get acquainted and begin to form working relationships. One way this can occur is through a residential experience, where the participants live and work together for an intense period of time. An introductory course designed to assess learning needs and enhance individual and group success is another way to encourage community development. A third way to foster collaboration is by offering a course in group process early in the program that looks at how people learn collaboratively, make decisions, and solve problems, using the group as a learning laboratory. Group problem solving exercises, team building activities and opportunities for students to learn more about one another such as the sharing of life histories are examples of activities which support community building.

In a cohort, the instructors are often present for only one course while the learning group remains the same. While faculty members are hired for their subject matter expertise, it is equally important for each faculty member to have the skills to attend to group process. Often issues will arise in a cohort that interfere with the learning process. A skillful instructor will help the group to process the issues so that they can turn their full attention to the course content. The learning that takes place in the process is often as valuable as the particular subject matter.

All groups develop their own culture and identity; therefore, it is important for an instructor to be sensitive to the group's cultural norms. A group who has become accustomed to interactive participation and dialogic learning will feel stifled in their development if a new instructor comes in with a more didactic style. Facilitators with an understanding of group dynamics will try to understand the learning needs of the group before imposing their own agenda.

Assumption 5: Authentic communication and a deeper exploration of course content, topics and issues results from knowing one's classmates over an extended period of time. A context is created for meaningful levels of discourse.

Unlike a traditional class where students come and go every 10-15 weeks, students in a cohort remain together for the duration of their program. This format has several advantages. Once the initial anxiety of meeting new people and negotiating relationship has past, students begin to open up and share more with one another. They go beyond the politeness stage and risk challenging one another and voicing disagreements. One participant expressed:

> It helps by knowing them or having been with them; I think I'm freer to make contributions to the class. Where as if I was in a group each term with strangers, I would hold back more.

As students begin to get to know their peers in the cohort they not only listen more carefully to others, ask questions and challenge one another, they are also more open to being challenged by others (Lawrence, 1996). It is this deeper level of sharing and discussion that leads to the creation of new knowledge.

As people get to know one another and share experiences over a period of time, they develop insights into each other's lifeworlds so that when comments are made, they are viewed in the larger context about what is known about that individual. One can respond to the totality of the individual rather that just his or her words.

Assumption 6: Multiple Ways of Knowing honors various traditions and cultural ways of creating knowledge and bridges the academic traditions of research, inquiry and creative or artistic forms of self-expression. Valuing various forms of inquiry and knowledge provoke educators to examine, assess and evaluate learning in ways that challenge rationale, linear, written forms of expressions as the only legitimate modes.

An extension of learning styles and learning how to learn conceptual literature (Smith, 1992), multiple ways of knowing respects the diverse forms of self-expression of learning outcomes. Educators need to learn how to learn to expand their understanding of this knowledge base and how to appreciate forms of expression which capture the full range of learning outcomes that can be experienced in cohort-based programs. (Lawrence and Mealman, 2000) Increasingly, a more diverse group of adult students are accessing adult higher education. When students are provided the opportunity to explore the possibilities, an amazing synergy occurs. The subsequent discourse moves to new levels of comprehension of phenomena. For example, in our Adult Development and Learning courses, students are encouraged to create original artwork that communicates some dimension of their development or to compose poetry, write short stories or draw together medleys of songs which express dimensions of who they are as they craft biographical material. For example, one student made a mask which created ah ha moments for her during the experience. It allowed her to experience and access dimensions of herself that lay beneath the surface of consciousness and which she wanted to explore as part of the course inquiry but could

not express in words. A Chinese woman painted a series of three classic Chinese paintings which expressed how she experienced adult development. A Columbian woman wrote and directed a play which expressed the fundamental research findings on the needs of Hispanic learners, from her Doctoral Critical Engagement Project (dissertation requirement), (Lawrence and Mealman, 2000).

The Renaissance-Adult Learning Cohorts Today

In the 1970's adults were just beginning to discover that they needed to and wanted to continue formal and informal learning. Today, adult learning programs are a regular feature in higher education. The baby boom generation that staged campus sit-ins in the 1960's are now flocking to colleges and universities in their middle age. New technologies have made it possible to link learners and learning resources across the globe. In response to the changing needs of these learners, institutions of higher learning developed graduate and undergraduate programs, which capitalize on the success of the cohort model in varied formats.

Graduate education has recognized that the accelerated cohort model is ideal for practitioners in business management, teacher education, adult education, counseling and other professions. Learners can bring real life issues from their practice into the classroom and utilize the resources of the group to gain new perspectives. As cohort learning expanded to include doctoral programs, the time the group remained together increased to three to five years, thus expanding our understanding of learning group dynamics over time.

Weekend and residential models have made it possible for those who are geographically dispersed to come together to form a learning community. In addition to being convenient for travel, the intensity of these formats allows for bonds to form between members in a shorter time frame. There are also increased opportunities for informal and incidental learning (Mealman,1991b) as students share meals, sleeping quarters and flexible time schedules.

In the 1970's and 80's, many adults discovered that they could find the time to attend class one night a week and still maintain their usual work schedule. With today's busy life styles, people are traveling more and working later hours. They are depending more and more on the internet for their information. Email has all but replaced letter writing. Colleges and universities have found a way to serve these learners along with those who live in remote areas and those for whom mobility impairments make commuting to a campus difficult. Instruction is being delivered online. These asynchronous discussion forums allow the learner to log on anytime, anywhere. They are not restricted to a particular class time or even a place. They can participate when they travel and even continue with the same class if they relocate. Another benefit of online learning is that it allows for more diverse learning groups as the students may literally hail from around the globe. Additionally, internet resources can be incorporated, and students can post their work online for peer critique. Some faculty (Palloff and Pratt, 1999) believe that online learning actually increases opportunities for collaboration and community building. A few of these online programs are being offered in the cohort model. When combined with a residential workshop to assist the students in getting to know one another and form working relationships, these cohorts can be as interactive and fulfilling as face to face groups (Lawrence, 1999).

Interactive video is another technology that is being utilized. Small groups of students at two or more locations meet as a single class and communicate in real- time

via television camera and monitor. This format meets the needs of students who do not want to travel a long distance to attend class. It also links groups from diverse communities and can connect people across institutions. Collaborative partnerships can more easily be facilitated where multiple institutions offer a single program of courses. This method of learning has its limitations, as sub-groups tend to form at the individual sites. The opportunities for informal interaction before and during class rarely exist across sites so often the group feels like two or three mini cohorts rather than one large group. The advantage of being in a cohort, however, is that the group has more time to learn how to learn as a group and make the technology work for them.

Many programs have been experimenting with combinations of formats. Some offer modified cohorts where students remain together for their core courses and take their electives as traditional courses or via independent study. This allows for more flexibility and choice of course offerings. Others offer revolving cohorts where students may start the program at any point in the curriculum. Some programs such as the California Institute for Integral Studies offer intense residential workshops combined with online courses.

As the needs of learners continue to shift and new technological advances become available, these programs will continue to evolve. One thing that has remained constant is our need for community and human contact. We believe this is why the cohort model has been so successful.

Future Directions

The above discussion suggests that there are compelling questions to pursue. In what ways can we influence and shape the direction of accelerated, cohort based education? What new directions will technology take the delivery of adult education? The most important question to consider will be to what extent can educators address the emergent learning needs with existing models of adult education. Will we be challenged to think beyond the current cohort-based, accelerated models? Are we addressing all learners' needs who could benefit from our programs or only serving those who can afford or access our existing systems? We accept that cohort-based learning does not meet all learners' needs, nor should it. To what extent can we build on the experience and research base as we further revise and extend the cohort model?

There are significant evaluation and learning assessment challenges presented if one takes our assumptions and conceptual model seriously. Who will accept the institutional challenges and assume leadership to examine more completely the range of student learning outcomes and the exciting possibilities of integrated, interdisciplinary collaborative efforts?

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A RESEARCH STUDY TO DISCOVER TEMPERAMENT TYPES, COMMUNICATION STYLES, AND LEARNING STYLES OF ADULT LEARNERS IN NON-TRADITIONAL AND ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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Introduction

In today's world, knowledge has become a vital element in determining the success of adults. In fact, it has become the key to the standard of living of those adults. New technologies and changes are commonplace. In response to the emerging new technologies and changes in the world, adults have found it necessary to become lifelong learners. As lifelong learners, many adults have returned to college to obtain their degrees.

When returning to college, numerous adults choose non-traditional classroom environments where interactive and collaborative learning has replaced the passive lecture and traditional classroom learning environments. These non-traditional learning environments are usually environments where the adults attend college one night a week with a cohort group. However, in response to new demands on adults' personal and professional lives, online learning environments now provide a needed alternative for many adult students. The online learning environments allow for asynchronous learning. This allows adults flexibility in determining time and location for their learning opportunities. Adults now, not only have a choice of college degrees, but also, a choice of types of learning environments. Typically, adults can choose between the traditional teacher centered environments, the student centered non-traditional classroom learning environments, and the online classroom learning environments.

A number of variables play a role when adults make a choice of learning environments. The variables can include temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles. Adults normally make conscious decisions as to which learning environment might be most appropriate for their needs. This does not mean that the adults think about their temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles, however.

As an enrollment counselor at a university, which offered non-traditional classroom learning environments and online learning environments, the researcher observed numerous adults having difficulty deciding which learning environments to select in obtaining their degrees. As a result of repeated observations such as this, the researcher reflected on her difficulties in selecting the type of learning environments for her degree programs. Out of this reflection process came a desire to understand whether temperament types, communication styles, or learning styles play a role when adults choose learning environments.

While there is a body of literature that discusses the nature of learning styles and the individual learners, there has been a lack of research that specifically examines the identification of temperament types, communication

styles, and learning styles in the selection of learning environments. The purpose of this research was to examine temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles generally prevalent in the adult non-traditional classroom learning environments and the online classroom learning environments by using surveys and assessments.

The patterns that emerged may assist the researcher and other educators in counseling students in the selection of learning environments in the future. The volunteers in this research received the results and may want to consider their temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles in the future when selecting learning environments in their life-long learning process.

The results may be an incentive for educational institutions, educators and researchers to do further research in this area. The results may be significant enough for institutions to consider providing self-assessment tools for learners to utilize in the selection of learning environments.

Relationship of the Research to Adult Education

The terms learning styles, cognitive styles, temperament types are often used interchangeably. James and Gardner state that:

> The ways individuals react to their overall learning environment make up the individual's learning style. No universally accepted terminology exists to describe learning style and its various components; however, how people react to their learning environment is a core concept (cited in Rossman and Rossman, 1995, p. 19).

When discussing learning styles, James and Gardner identify three dimensions and they "include the perceptual (physiological or sensory) mode, the cognitive (mental or information processing) mode, and the affective (emotional or personality characteristics) mode" (cited in Rossman and Rossman, 1995, p. 19). This research attempted to research these dimensions.

There are a number of variables that determine how adults are going to learn. These can include the adults' previous experiences, the adults values, the adults' personalities, the adults' cultures, the adults' learning motivations, and the adults' learning styles.

Typically, the instructors adjust their practice to accommodate for the adults' preferred learning styles. This research looked at the learning styles from a different perspective where the adult learners could possibly identify their preferred learning styles before selecting their learning environments. The adults can then choose environments that accommodate their learning styles or environments that will be an introduction to new alternative styles of learning. In this research inquiry, the researcher reviewed the environments selected by learners and not the methodology of instruction within those environments. This research attempted to identify whether or not there was a correlation between learning styles and the selection of the learning environments.

Objective

The researcher's objective was to determine the temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles of adult learners in the non-traditional classroom learning environments and the online classroom learning environments.

Methodology

The methodology was scientific in nature. The research utilized quantitative methods and statistical procedures to determine if patterns existed. The data was gathered and was related in quantitative terms. This research differed from some quantitative research, however, because a hypothesis was not developed. According to Creswell, "In quantitative studies...questions, objectives, and hypotheses represent specific restatements of the purpose of the study. In survey projects these restatements typically take the form of research questions and objectives; in experiments, they are hypotheses" (1994, p. 72). Since this was a survey research project, a hypothesis was not developed. A statement of objectives was utilized to form the direction of the research.

The researcher utilized a number of inventory assessment tools for the research. There are numerous learning-style inventories available. The researcher chose instruments that had undergone thorough validity testing and had previously been used by researchers.

In diagnosing the affective dimension, the researcher utilized the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. This was used to identify the adults' specific temperament types.

In diagnosing the perceptual dimension, specifically the communication dimension, the researcher utilized the I-Speak Your Language Survey produced by Drake, Beam Morin, Inc. This instrument identifies communication styles utilized when interacting with groups. According to Drake, Beam Morin, Inc., the four communication styles are the intuitors, thinkers, feelers, and sensors (1998, p. 5).

In diagnosing the cognitive dimension, the researcher utilized Kolb's Learning Style Inventory. According to Kolb, this instrument identifies learning styles and categorizes them into four basic types. These types include the converger, the diverger, the assimilator, and the accommodator (1985, p. 7).

Population and Sample

The researcher used a single-stage sampling procedure by utilizing a convenience sample of volunteer adult students. The researcher contacted previous and current adult students in non-traditional classroom learning environments and online classroom learning environments at the University of Phoenix, California State University in Hayward, and National-Louis University to participate in the research. There were twenty-five volunteers from the non-traditional learning environments and twenty-five volunteers from the online learning environments.

Undoubtedly a random sample would have been more desirable and would possibly have enabled the researcher to generalize the findings of the

research to the entire population. In this research, the adult students were chosen on the basis of their availability and willingness to volunteer to participate because of the time constraints in completing the research.

Procedures

Table and graphs were created utilizing the information from the assessments. Data comparisons of collected data were done rather than statistical tests. The data comparisons involved comparing frequency of responses and percentages of responses in each learning environment for each of the surveys. It is possible that there was a lack of precision and bias. The lack of precision would be due to the small sample size. The bias would be due to the voluntary response sample.

Conclusion

By utilizing the data comparisons, the research indicated that 60% of the students were extroverts. Forty-four percent of the extroverts had ESTJ temperament types. Keirsey stated that the ESTJs are extraverted thinking, supported by sensing (1984, pp. 14-26). The online learning environments showed that 56% of the students were introverts. Eighty-six percent of the introverts were perceivers. Twenty-four percent of the online students had INFP temperament types. Keirsey stated that the INFPs are introverted feeling, supported by intuition (1984, pp. 14-26).

The majority of survey respondents in the non-traditional learning environments had extrovert and judging temperament types. The non-traditional learning environment may provide the collaborative learning environments where there is the needed interaction between students and facilitators of learning. In contrast, many of the online students were introverts and perceivers. Introverts like the opportunity to work quietly alone and to read and meditate. The perceivers like to collect more data before decisions or statements are made. The online learning environments may allow the students to concentrate on pieces of information at their own pace and to reflect on the meaning of that information before responding online. In the nontraditional learning environment, the introverts may find that the subject of the conversation has changed before they have had adequate time to reflect.

Twenty-four percent of the online students had the INFP temperament type. The online environment allows those students to use their preferred style of communicating by utilizing the written word.

The data comparisons of the communication styles in the non-traditional learning environments indicated that 32% of the students were thinkers and 32% were feelers. The data indicated that only 8% of the online students were thinkers and 44% were feelers in their communication styles.

In analyzing the non-traditional classroom learning environments, the possible significant communication styles were the thinkers and feelers. These two styles made up the majority of the total sample. In contrast, the data indicated that the majority of the online students were feelers and very few were

thinkers. The online environment may allow the necessary daily interaction with classmates that is needed by the feelers.

The most dominant learning style in the non-traditional classroom learning environment was the accommodator style. Those with this style like to learn from first hand experience. This possibly makes the non-traditional learning environments conducive to learning for those with the accommodator style.

In contrast, the most dominant learning style in the online learning environments was the diverger style. The online environment allows those students to observe rather than participate in interactive classroom groups.

The results from the assessment surveys were significant enough that students, educators, and researchers might want to review the findings. The researcher would recommend that further research be conducted on the effect of temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles on selections of learning environments.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The results of this research study suggest that further research in the areas of temperament types, communication styles, and learning styles are warranted. Such research might provide additional insight into factors of significance in the selection of learning environments. Since the results of this research indicated that there were a high percentage of students who were introverts and perceivers in the online environments, this research should be replicated using a larger random sample. This might provide data of statistical significance.

In the review of the literature, temperament types, specifically the kind of perception and kind of judgment, may determine the direction in which adults can develop most fully. Therefore, this study should be replicated comparing selected learning environments and specific degree programs with temperament types of students.

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EDUCATIONAL PLANNING: GOING ONLINE

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Empire State College, founded in 1971, pioneered the individualized approach to degree completion for the nontraditional adult learner. Empire State College honors the student's prior learning through acceptance of credit earned through previous college experience and standardized examination programs such as CLEP, DANTES and TECEP. Empire State College pioneered, also, an extensive process for evaluation of learning through life and work experience. Finally, Empire State College mentors work with students to develop learning contracts that address their individual learning objectives in the context of a liberal arts education.

Given the individualized nature of the program, students of necessity need a high degree of self-direction. At the core of this self-direction is **Educational Planning**, a course generally undertaken at the beginning of a student's enrollment. Educational Planning is a labor intensive, highly collaborative activity between student and mentor. Its outcome is a degree program focused on each student's learning goals, incorporating previous learning from various sources, research on current curriculum requirements and professional expectations in a career field.

Although the Educational Planning contract is as individualized as each student, it has common threads: the nature of a liberal education, the changing nature of the workplace, the need for breadth of learning coupled with depth in a concentration.

Educational Planning has been essentially a solitary activity, accomplished through independent study and one-on-one meetings between student and mentor. It could be an even more solitary activity for students in the Center for Distance Learning, whose geographic disparity meant that their contact with mentors occurred via telephone, mail and, more recently, e-mail.

A successful study in Educational Planning requires a strong relationship between the mentor and the mentee, whereby the student feels sufficiently empowered to engage in substantive dialogue. It also requires a student who is self-assured and self-directed, who brings to the process a set of skills, knowledge, and experiences from his/her own life circumstances, and who will engage in critical self-reflection and self-assessment. In this ideal situation, the mentor and student work collaboratively and the study progresses smoothly for the student to complete all appropriate goals, including the development of a personalized degree program plan.

Unfortunately, the majority of our students are not self-assured or sufficiently self-directed, or even goal-oriented for this study, and they therefore present major challenges to the process in reaching a successful conclusion to the study. In our experiences with our distance learning students, several factors regarding the nature of the study and the readiness of the student are compounded by the delivery methodology which maintains the student in isolation.

Some of these challenges and obstacles are examined now:
a) the study itself: unlike subject matter studies/contracts dealing with content, Educational Planning deals with process. Students find it confusing and protracted and they fail to develop a workable pace in order to complete in a reasonable time. Also, much of the study involves self assessment on the part of the students, because in order for them to develop/ascertain their personal, professional, and academic goals, they need to engage in a comprehensive self-analysis to determine their appropriate strengths and readiness to pursue any espoused academic goals. In a one-to-one relationship with a mentor, the consumption of time is inordinate.

b) the nature of the student: first, the unprepared or under-prepared student does not possess the requisite set of basic academic or personal skills to engage in Educational Planning. Perhaps writing or reading skills are inadequate, and he/she cannot adequately absorb the reading materials to begin to engage in dialogue with the mentor; second, the uncertain student is one who is inadequately prepared to work collaboratively with a mentor but who leans heavily on the mentor for direction. This type of student says to the mentor, " Tell me what I have to study to earn my degree". This is a passive learner who perceives the mentoring relationship as an uneven one with a disparity of power heavily on the mentor's side. The student believes that the mentor is all-knowing and that the student is an empty shell while the mentor is seen as possessing knowledge and skills far beyond those of the student. This is an uneven situation whereby successful dialogue is impossible or uncertain. The mentor has to spend an enormous amount of time to build up the student's sense of self, to transform the reluctant and passive learner to a threshold of activism in order to begin to get engaged in that dialogue. No doubt, these situations necessitate the devotion of much time for the partners to develop as a team.

But time is a luxury for both our mentors and our adult students, most of whom hold full-time or part-time jobs. The challenge can be more daunting in a distance learning mode where the mentor-student team loses many of the advantages of face-to-face contact. More valuable time is thus needed to allow the mentor to provide a lot of initial guidance and direction to the student before a level of trust can be established. The more time consuming this process, the more difficult it will be for the student to overcome a dependency on the mentor for continued guidance. Further, the uncertainty/infrequency of contact between mentor and student as they play "phone tag" adds to the difficulty experienced by the hesitant or under-prepared student. All these factors make the successful completion of the Educational Planning study difficult to achieve with a distance learning audience.

In Spring, 2000, the Center for Distance Learning adapted the Educational Planning course for delivery on the WWW. There are certain constants to Educational Planning at ESC no matter how the course is designed: constants in philosophy, activities, and context. The philosophy, grounded in adult education theory, is simple: help the student take charge and direct his/her research in order to make

informed decisions about the degree. However simple the philosophy is, the ways in which we enact the philosophy can be relatively complex, only because there are so many possible ways to proceed. Over the years, faculty have developed a repertoire of educational planning activities to help the student take charge by exploring academic skills, degree expectations, career expectations, and educational issues. These activities occur within a broader context set either explicitly or implicitly depending on student, faculty mentor, and mode of study, a context that focuses on the experience of higher education and the qualities of a college-educated person. It seems to us (and we are sure that we'd get a debate here from many of our colleagues) that there's an emphasis on philosophy, activities, or context depending on the mode in which educational planning occurs.

For example, the print-based Educational Planning course described above emphasized activities. Students operated within an overall structure designed to approximate the process and the flexibility inherent in the process of informed decision-making. They chose certain activities (e.g., completing skills self-assessments, researching the system of higher education in another country, writing an essay,) to help answer the four decision-making questions around which the course was structured. The print-based educational planning courses were very process-oriented, with the process of informed decision-making taught through the completion of student-selected activities; the student's work in those activities was the means through which to focus on the context of "education."

On the other hand, educational planning as traditionally taught through an ESC Learning Contract emphasizes the ESC philosophy, which asks the student to articulate ideas for learning activities based on where the student thinks he/she needs to develop. This change in focus—the shift toward a discussion of the purpose and processes of the course—becomes the means through which to focus on the context of "education."

Both of these approaches, the learning contract with its emphasis on process through philosophy and the print course with its emphasis on process through activities, rely heavily on faculty mentors to help construct context through discussion, evaluation, and reflection with the student. The online Educational Planning courses, in contrast, are designed to help students construct context more directly.

Educational Planning 211 is designed to help students construct an understanding of the context of "higher education." It starts as a discussion-based course, with the discussion building upon and refining itself as it moves along. Initially, students are asked to introduce themselves and explain why they're pursuing degrees. After their introductions, as part of their first discussion, they're also asked to share the qualities that they think make up that thing called an "educated person": What are the content areas and skills an educated person needs to know? Is there a substantial difference between the characteristics of an educated person and a college-educated person? If so, what accounts for this difference? Students are asked to discuss the similarities or trends in their thoughts in order to develop an emerging picture of the educated person.
After students share, examine, and debate their own definitions of an "educated person/college-educated person," the next unit of the course asks them to read about expectations for college graduates offered by the Association of American Colleges and the SUNY Board of Trustees in order to build on the first discussion. Similarly, the section after that asks them to read about expectations for an educated worker in the 21st century

to further build the discussion of "educated person." Students are asked to draw relationships between academic skills and work or life skills as discussed in these articles. In effect, they're expected to (and they do) develop their own increasingly broad *and* refined context for thinking about higher education.

The goal of the course design, after six weeks of discussion that builds increasingly upon itself, is to use the context that students have developed to spur their movement into individualized learning contract activities that help further their development as educated people, based on the understanding of "educated person" that they've constructed communally. They use the next six weeks of the course to pursue individual work, with the opportunity to share and discuss that work with others in the course. During the last three weeks of the course, students come back together to discuss their experiences more formally and to think about them within the context of their own characteristics as learners.

The follow-up course, Educational Planning 212, is designed in very much the same way but toward a different end result. While the first educational planning course is intended to lay the groundwork for making decisions about the degree by establishing a broad context, the second educational planning course is intended to help students make more particular decisions about their specific coursework by helping them create a narrower context—the expectations for an associate or a bachelor degree. Educational Planning 212 is designed around specific case studies, the degree plans and accompanying essays of students that, along with additional readings and research about college degrees, are intended to help students develop this narrower context in which they can make decisions about the components of their own degrees.

Although both educational planning courses are works in progress, to be refined as we gain more experience, both do seem to be working in getting students, collectively, to create a context for thinking about their own educational processes. So far, in the first, broader-based educational planning course, much of the student discussion each semester has focused on the equal value of "book learning" and "practical learning," with increasing understanding of the nature of "book learning" and how it relates to and enhances "practical learning."* In the second, narrower educational planning course, much of the student discussion has focused on the breadth of study expected in a college degree in the U.S. More importantly, discussion has taken place without much faculty participation or intervention—the discussion has been very much student-generated and student-run.

The online versions of educational planning show an evolution in thinking about the academic planning process; they are designed for students to take even more initiative in understanding the context in which they are pursuing their degrees.

Online, the courses enable us to return to, build upon, and even archive the conversational core of ESC. Still, the courses could be more open in terms of design—they could approach the creation of context differently. We can envision a design in which students create and develop increasingly refined understandings of the context of higher education over time. Ideally, the ability to talk with other students about these educational issues should not be limited to the fifteen-week semester of the course. But those changes are for the future, for a time when faculty understanding of electronic learning environments catches up with their content expertise and their commitment to adults as learners. For now, we need to learn how to be comfortable interacting in a largely

student-run learning experience, how to function in mentoring roles within this new environment, how to evaluate student learning that is not traditionally content- or process-based. For now we need to focus on current experiences with the course in order to determine our next steps.

To paraphrase a student in the course: As an intelligent adult, I can tell that a politician/advertiser/writer is manipulating information. But studying statistics and logic can help know *how* he's doing it. In effect, students are coming to undeerstand, in their own terms, the usefulness of the various fields of academic study and their relationship to their own lives.

Certain expectations motivated the developers. In this asynchronous environment, the influence of peers would enrich the degree planning process by providing a community of learners. As James Botkin says, "Probably no greater need exists than to learn how to participate effectively. Many studies have shown that humans are, and always have been, social animals." (quoted in Steltenpohl et al 92). A community of learners is not necessarily a learning group, a key element of today's workplace. However, they may share some characteristics such as freedom of expression and skills of joint inquiry and problem solving (Ibid, 93)

"In *Workplace 2000*, the most valuable commodity will be knowledge and the pulsating flow of ideas exchanging, interacting and expanding. To participate in the game Americans will have to possess the requisite skills. " (Boyett and Conn quoted in Steltenpohl et al 208) This community of learners requires each member to take responsibility, through clarifying what others say, supporting one another's insights and seeking feedback. Kenneth Bruffee supports the idea that "...knowledge is something people construct by talking together and reaching agreement. Knowledge is not simply the transfer of ideas from teacher to student." (quoted in Steltenpohl et al 95)

To what extent did this occur in the Educational Planning course? Students did communicate with one another through the responses that they posted to specific assignments and to one another's comments and interpretations. As the course progressed, participants did appear to grow more comfortable in expressing their opinions and evaluations of common work tasks, sometimes challenging a comment, sometimes extending an idea. A climate of openness did develop, particularly in student discussions of the common assignments and readings. There did develop, also, a willingness to share ideas and resources, to assist one another in downloading and navigating various sites and links.

Ernest Boyer commented that "Just as we search culturally to maintain the necessary balance between private and public obligations, in education we seek the same end. The college, at its best, recognizes that, although we live alone, we also are deeply dependent on each other. Through an effective college education, students should become personally empowered and also committed to the common good." (quoted in Steltenpohl et all 111) Boyer's comments, written in 1987, anticipate in some ways the vast changes that have occurred in the American workplace, where work groups, group problem solving and collaborative activity are commonplace.

In addition to creating a community of learners around this common objective, that is, designing an individualized degree program, the online experience did enable student exposure to a diversity of viewpoints. Typically, when working at a distance in educational planning, they have no input from other students. In local study groups, they are limited to

input from students typically from fairly similar backgrounds. In the online discussion sessions, however, they are exposed to people throughout the country, indeed, throughout the world. This is particularly helpful when students are considering professional expectations for their chosen fields, since they can gain information on employer expectations in other geographic areas.

Students generally enroll in Educational Planning in their first term with the College. So their commentary on common readings and the drafts of their degree programs can provide mentors with an informal tool for evaluation of critical thinking and writing skills. Since we expect a great deal of writing from students at ESC, we want to know as soon as possible how well they can write. Can they clearly express ideas in writing? Can they present a logical argument and defend a point of view? As students participate in discussion regarding readings and case studies, they provide us with numerous, informal writing samples. We can easily spot simple, recurring errors as well as major problems that we can address with the students individually. By the time that students are actually planning their degree programs, what we have learned about their writing, along with the results of their formal writing assessment, enables us to provide suggestions about appropriate writing courses.

As mentors facilitated the discussions and provided feedback on both the discussions and the draft documents, they were able to catch students' misunderstandings and clarify not only data-related issues but conceptual ones as well. Students seemed less inhibited with the discussion than they might be in formal papers. They appeared more willing to "try out" ideas (and risk being wrong) than when writing a formal paper.

We can also get a feel for their critical reading and thinking skills. When working alone, a student typically doesn't have an opportunity to see what other students are writing and how we as faculty are responding. This team approach on the part of the faculty is an advantage that's often not available in other on-line courses.

Finally, the course built in a faculty discussion area. This provided an opportunity for faculty to discuss concerns about the course, make needed changes along the way and jointly help students as the need arose. Those of us who have been working in educational planning for many years have an opportunity to share from our storehouse of knowledge; newcomers have us as a resource that cannot often be taken advantage of when working individually in the print based format.

Such discussion might be much more difficult to make happen in a traditional setting. As Kenneth Bruffee notes, "Communities of knowledgeable peers construct knowledge in an ongoing negotiation to consensus that involves increasingly larger and more complex communities of knowledgeable peers...." (quoted in Steltenpohl et al 97). The ongoing faculty discussion does elucidate, confirm and contribute to revisions in subsequent versions of the course.

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Do Faculty Gear the Language of Distance Education Web Courses to Adult Learners?

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FRAMEWORK

Adult learners, according to Knowles (1980: 24), perform adult roles (social definition) and are responsible for their lives (psychological definition). Also, adult learners are self-directed (see Portway & Lane 1994, citing the work of Knowles), and much of teaching today is learner-centered anyway and probably will continue to be this way in the future (see Duderstadt 1999). Adults or students who are in the process of taking on adult characteristics are often the audience for university-level web courses. Open enrollment and working at one's own pace address the needs of adult learners, who usually have schedule and career concerns (see Loewenthal et al. 1980: 37). To reach several age levels simultaneously, Apps (1981) and Knowles (1980) recommend allowing adult learners to take only those *parts of* courses that they need.

Bååth (1983: 274) feels that distance education (print) courses are constructed the same way whether the audience is adults or young students; adults have less time to study and need an "immediately meaningful" experience. To differentiate the audiences, he recommends using separate appendices, part of his general philosophy of serving individual needs (Bååth 1983: 274-275). Those who make no distinction in gearing courses to adults vs. others are in accord with the ideas of Bååth 1983.

MEDIA

Media may be characterized as 'rich' or 'lean,' the latter meaning text-based, including the format of e-mail plus emoticons (Russo 2000). An example of an emoticon is :) [colon, close parentheses], meaning the writer is smiling and means no offense (see Ellsworth 1994: 382).The instructor's 'social presence' can overcome the limits of lean media and contribute to student satisfaction, affective learning, and cognitive learning (Russo 2000). Put another way, online instructors must humanize the environment (Resta 2000). All of this echoes what independent study has long been guiding course authors to do (see Smith 1994 and references therein).

Wlodkowski (1999: 192) notes that in the classroom, adult learners rely heavily on vocal quality in communication. This implies that Internet talk operates at a loss unless an audio component or its written equivalent (e.g., emoticons) is present.

STYLE

Discussion of "language" or "style" in distance education and/or web courses is often brief or understated. In her discussion of course development, King (1998:

30), includes this style guideline: "Match the language and design of the site to the skills and needs of its intended audience." This is sound advice but not very explanatory. Since learner-centeredness is the focus today, much of the literature, e.g., Sherry and Wilson 1997, is on the student's role in classroom discussion, not the language of teachers.

Discussing self-instructional print materials for distance education, Davis (1990: 245, 247-248, citing Britton, Glynn, and Smith 1985) looks at college-level distance education materials, noting the importance of familiar words, "vocabulary that is appropriate to the audience" (p. 245)—taking into account audience reading levels—and simpler syntax.

For adult learning in general, Wlodkowski (1999: 55) stresses clarity, specifically noting the value of transitions such as "*the next step, the second phase,* and *now we turn to...* ." Familiar words and examples also help avoid vagueness (p. 55). Without clarity of instruction, student frustration with web courses can result (Hara and Kling 1999).

In print courses offered at a distance, "authors" (course developers or writers) ideally use direct, informal, personal, and clear language to communicate with students. Classroom lectures or discussions must be converted to a "study guide" style (Smith 1994). Distance education courses must rest on a good study guide, electronic or print, using "a relatively informal, conversational tone rather than a literary or scholarly one" (Moore 1997: 2). In addition to making the guide readable, the author—and editor or designer--must also make use of white space, typefaces, graphics, and other devices to break up the text and to communicate teaching (Moore 1997: 2). In web courses, color, links, and graphics are especially important. Web course authors can be encouraged not only to imagine writing to students, but also to help the student visualize the information (*Author's Manual* 1999: 61).

Cornell and Martin (1997: 98), in a discussion of motivation, list three characteristics of "readable style" in web-based instruction: active voice, action verbs; sentences of moderate length; and variation in vocabulary. Khan and Vega (1997: 378) note that the web design should be "logical, user-friendly, and meaningful," without specifically defining "meaningful."

Electronic message systems draw from oral and written language (Horowitz and Samuels 1987: 27): the informality of telephone conversation combined with letter-writing style. Another view is that e-mail communication can range from an "oral and rough style to a more formal style" (Peraya 1994). Difficult words or other communicative barriers can naturally impede adult learning (Kidd 1973, cited in Smith 1994: 165).

TYPES OF COURSES

What kinds of web courses exist?

Independent study

Russell and Olson (1999) raise the question of whether print-based independent study courses are so different that they need not follow new classroom practices or theories, e.g., contructivism and social learning. Although they focus on high school-level courses, their observations could equally apply to university-level or adult learning. Since such theories *are* used in some interactive web courses, print and web can be very different. On the other hand, one can add e-mail to a print course format and achieve a type of web learning. Practical considerations such as time and money, especially with CD-ROM, and the knowledge base of the authors and designers/editors naturally affect the final product; not all web courses are created equal, some being based on print models, others not (B. Russell 1999). Consider now this quotation by Dede (1996: 34) on the collaboration that makes distance education successful:

> The most significant influence on the evolution of distance education will be not the technical development of more powerful devices, but rather the professional development of wise designers, educators, and learners.

Other online courses

Web courses can be informational (online syllabus); supplemental (much course content online); essential (requiring HTML skills); communal (chatrooms, etc.); and immersive (no face-to-face [FTF]; usually learner-centered and constructivistic) (Harmon and Jones 1999). Eastmond (1998) presents another taxonomy ranging from lowest to highest technological complexity. Another category, distributed learning (Dede 1996), combines online and classroom teaching, blurring the distinction between distance and other formats.

High hypertext component

In non-linear hypertext, the reader/student/instructor must learn to navigate and link as well as just read. While linear text involves coherent arguments (Foltz 1996), hypertext is more interruptive and flexible. However, readers can skip ahead, reread, and employ other strategies, so the linear/non-linear distinction is not necessarily clear-cut.

COLLEGE TEACHING AND ADULT LEARNING

As Duderstadt (1999: 6-7) points out, the classroom is relatively new, previous eras having relied mostly on apprenticeship. The "digital generation" expects interaction, he notes, but earlier generations may be more passivized by television and other media. We can infer that in teaching adult learners, educators have to consider the relative age of those learners and their respective desires for interaction, and train themselves in that area. Adults today naturally vary in age, computer literacy, and experience with interactivity.

Unfortunately, as Wolcott (1993: 32) points out, many college teachers are "generally untrained in lesson and curriculum planning." When faced with distance teaching, they continue to focus on subject matter/content and lecture format.

Further, they often are unfamiliar with distance and adult learners (p. 33). An unanswered question, as of 1993 at least, is whether awareness of adult learning would create new teaching techniques (p. 35; see University of Illinois 1999 for similar issues).

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

Lecture persists if only for economic reasons—one instructor reaching many students at once. Now, of course, we can reach many students electronically, with or without lecturing. Using new teaching and learning methods is essential in today's online and distance education.

Hillman 1996 lists three basic forms of classroom language: lecture (the least effective: teacher essentially delivers a speech), recitation (the most typical: teacher dominates, but student can interact), and discussion (rarely used: teacher is less dominant, students do most of the talking). New distance education technologies allow for FTF and computer-mediated communication (CMC) (see also Hillman 1999).

Harasim et al. (1995) recommend not lecturing in online courses as a general rule. They note, however, that "electures" (electronic lectures) can be used if they are "short and focused" with "open-ended remarks and interesting questions to stimulate discussion" (p. 178). Stylistic advice includes "personalizing remarks," avoiding hostility, using humor and emoticons, and generally creating a "cooperative and supportive atmosphere" (Harasim et al. 1995: 210).

Murphy and Collins (1997: 4, citing Brookfield 1986: 135) note that *discussion* is an important part of adult education (see also Brookfield and Preskill 1999). Thus FTF or mediated discussions help adults meet their educational goals.

WRITING AND SPEAKING

An eternal problem is that, as Stubbs (1986: 203) notes, "The vast bulk of printed material has no well-defined addressee. ... Writers are uncertain what they can assume their readers know, and readers are usually unable to ask the writer for clarification." In distance education, however, the "reader" is a student who can ask for clarification. Stubbs (1980: 103) points out that some students do not use all the available strategies such as skimming, re-reading, and changing reading speed when reading assigned materials. One wonders how much this is true in "reading" print and web courses.

Writing to an audience inevitably takes us to studies of writing (literacy) and speech (orality). Linguists D. Tannen (1982a, b) and R. Lakoff (1982) point out that features of written and oral language are intertwined (see also Nystrand 1986: 85-86; Smith 1994). Tannen (1982a: 3-4, 14) notes that on the oral/literate continuum, orality emphasizes interpersonal involvement between speaker/writer and audience, whereas literacy focuses on message content, with gradations along the continuum.

Extrapolating from this, web courses that are high on Tannen's interpersonal involvement (perhaps in the form of interactivity) draw primarily on orality (possibly

classroom discussion or conversation), whereas any course that stresses facts and content is drawing primarily from literacy (possibly textbooks or academic writing). Further, one can expect writing down lectures or discussions, electronic or otherwise, to involve a mixing of oral and written styles.

Chafe and Danielewicz (1987) see many differences among four styles: conversations, lectures, letters, and academic papers. 'Involvement'(opposed to 'detachment') with the audience, for example, is very important in conversation, minimal in lectures, high in letters (to the point of egocentrism), and lacking in academic writing. A web author who relies on academic writing in his/her web course will probably achieve detachment rather than involvement. Biber (1988), drawing heavily on Chafe (1982) and Chafe and Danielewicz (1987), notes that academic texts have high 'integration,' apparent in the use of nominalizations, participles, attributive adjectives, and series of prepositional phrases. Academic texts also have high 'detachment' apparent in nominalizations and passives. On the other hand, conversational texts are high in 'fragmentation,' apparent in "clauses in succession without connectives or joined by coordinating conjunctions" (Biber 1988: 21). Conversational texts are high in 'involvement,' apparent in first person pronouns, emphatic particles (*a lot, just, really, most, more,* etc.), and hedges (*something like, more or less, almost, maybe, etc.*). Applying all this to web courses, we can expect conversational text with high fragmentation and involvement.

In that same spirit, Davis (1990: 247-248) suggests the following for distance education print materials: active over passive voice; and simple sentences for independent ideas, complex or compound sentences for ideas to be integrated, and sentence variety to keep the reader's interest. In addition, she recommends that new or emphasized information be placed at the *end* of sentences.

QUESTIONS

A question posed to instructors by Berge (1997: 47) in researching computer-mediated courses is: "[I]f you taught off-line before teaching online, did you change your style once online, and why?" In considering this question, we should realize that a faculty member's online course for adult learners will be a function of several factors such as:

- What s/he does in class, and where s/he learned that technique
- What s/he knows and applies regarding the (adult) student audience
- How much an administrative office or instructional designer modifies the content or advises the instructor
- How new the course is and how much has been learned from previous offerings.

Further, there is a movement away from authoritarian teaching toward a more student-centered approach (Relan and Gillani 1997; Sherry and Wilson 1997). If teachers are facilitators (Perraton 1988), will they change their language to reflect

egalitarian or democratic attitudes? There is already talk of instructors being the "guide on the side," not "the sage on the stage."

My research questions focus on web authors or web authors in progress. These questions were presented to faculty by e-mail or in person, with some adjustments being made for individual circumstances. In addition, free-form comments were solicited.

1. Have you ever developed/taught an entirely print-based distance education course? If so, did it also have an electronic version as well?

2. Are you aware of using language that is any different in electronic courses as opposed to print-based courses (or as opposed to writing in general)? If so, what have you done differently?

3. If your courses are geared to (or otherwise include) adult audiences, have you deliberately used different phraseology or vocabulary? Examples?

4. Do you use any web-specific techniques in electronic courses (besides the obvious links, web resources, etc.) that are aimed at an adult audience?

5. In any of the above areas, were you following a particular educational philosophy or the advice of an instructional designer/editor?

I looked, where possible, at the web instructors' URLs to analyze their work rather than assume solely from their conversation that they followed a certain style. However, I also valued their interpretation. Further, I remembered that faculty are often under a deadline to produce new web courses and cannot always focus on "proper" style.

Interviews/case studies

One independent study author, Linda Manning of the University of Missouri-Rolla, recommends 'personal' phraseology in web course, and a timely interaction between instructor and student, noting also that the prime advantage of online study guides is the reduction in time and cost in accessing study materials (Manning 1999b; see also Manning 1999a).

Another independent study author, Ronald J. Bieniek of the University of Missouri-Rolla, recommends the use of voice, as on CD-ROMs, that explain concepts in physics (Bieniek 1999). Specifically, he feels that short-interval voice segments of one-half to two minutes' length help the student focus on what is being displayed, falling short of a lecture that students might tune out (Bieniek 2000).

Barbara Townsend, Associate Dean for Research and Development at the University of Missouri-Columbia's College of Education, has taught EL455: The Community College as an independent study course

(http://cdis.missouri.edu/previews/1806/1806.htm) and as an on-campus web course with two FTF meetings per semester. The two courses were prepared at the same time, both starting in winter 2000, largely based on independent study formats; lesson components included purpose, objectives, reading assignment, study questions, commentary (the prose bulk), references, and suggested readings. Townsend had, however, never developed a print course: she followed Missouri's guidelines for independent study courses in general, with some modifications. Her teaching philosophy is social constructivist, but she used a banking or information transfer approach in these courses. As a result, she found that some students expected a "correct answer" in the text (textbook or the online course commentary); in grading, she decided it was acceptable to give an answer to a student via e-mail, whereas she would not normally do this when returning graded papers to an entire class. Thus she rethought her critiquing system and the matter of students giving answers to one another. She also felt the pace of students was disappointingly slow (very common in self-paced distance courses). Further, the emphasis on text in independent study compelled her to do additional research to provide ample lessons for the students, whereas in the classroom, she might rely more on the textbook or on spontaneous discussion. Townsend's course, much like her classroom teaching and writing, is jargon-free and not very theoretical, being aimed at master's level students. Were the course doctoral level, she would teach more theory. In March 2000, there were fewer than ten students enrolled in either course, so there was little evidence of how often or well students used links. Townsend made mostly minor revisions to the course in May 2000, based on both classroom and independent study experiences. Changes that she has contemplated are omitting FTF in the classroom version and adding a mandatory chatroom.

The Pennsylvania State University had a course and later a resource guide for online faculty (Carnevale 2000). In e-mail discussions with Beth Egan (Egan 2000), one of the few faculty who actively took and appreciated the course, she described her experiences with print-based and electronic courses in dietetics (http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu:8900/welcome/dpde). One print course has web enhancements (lesson submission, bulletin board, web resources, and alternate [web] assignments). In that course, the web is used to update the print content. Two other print courses have an e-mail lesson submission option. In electronic courses, the content (text) is broken up into chunks more so than in print. The audience is working adults, the average age being mid-30s, allowing Egan to use food industry jargon more freely than she might with younger undergraduates. Bulletin boards, automatic grading of some assignments, and flexible lesson submission are employed. For training beyond the course offered to faculty, Egan learned from senior faculty, seminars, and testing out ideas with students. Although she did not use the instructional design staff much, her print-based materials are edited, so there are textual modifications.

R. Fudge's Philosophy 171-2: Critical Thinking, offered online at Syracuse University, tends to have an older audience in online form (Fudge1999), but his

language is the same for all versions. He had never developed a print-based course and had no instructional designer to help create the course. His language includes clear lectures and clear steps toward solving problems in "the identification and evaluation of arguments and explanations" (Fudge 1999).

Tom Kochtanek of the University of Missouri-Columbia's Information Science and Learning Technologies has been teaching with the web since 1995 and may have developed that university's first web course, Q334, on computer applications in libraries. The class is almost entirely graduate students with high GPAs, the average age of these adult learners being about 36. A distance offering, there are out-of-state and even overseas students. Kochtanek did his own programming and HTML, updating over the years as needed. He did not follow any one recognized educational theory nor have an instructional designer's help. He does, however, describe his approach to teaching as "non-linear," i.e., his web course is not just a linear extension of the classroom. The course involves projects, a threaded discussion, and an emphasis on inquiry. To get away from passive learning, Kochtanek creates a community of learners, to the point that some continue to study together even into the following semester. Students must stay on task even if their motivation for taking a web course is "convenience" or "flexibility." Although most of the course is electronic, there is sometimes a meeting during the semester. There is no textbook, only journal or electronic journal assignments. Kochtanek reads student e-mail daily, designating important student comments with a checkmark unseen by the students themselves. There are about ten framed WebPages with links to other resources. Verbal style varies according to the context: group vs. individual. Kochtanek's remarks to the group are planned and edited in advance. In addition, he often finds it necessary to teach netiquette along the way, although he himself does not use emoticons in his electronic writing. In addressing individuals, he is less formal and more familiar, occasionally communicating off-line to handle specific student needs.

Lila Pennington, clinical instructor in the University of Missouri-Columbia's Charles and Josie Smith Sinclair School of Nursing, has taught or developed semester-based online distance education nursing courses in Clinical Pharmacology (http://mucourses.missouri.edu/scripts/show.asp?n=55) and Advanced Health Assessment and Promotion (http://mucourses.missouri.edu/scripts/show.asp?n=34). In these courses, Pennington served as facilitator of online chats. Students were all R.N.s of approximately the same adult age and all novices to technology. The courses were motivational and problem-based, containing less lecture than the classroom, although the classroom versions also have some problems-based material. The netiquette presented in the syllabus was standard, not unique to the content area. Few students availed themselves of the emoticons described in the course netiquette but often felt freely anonymous in the chats and showed a sense of humor during occasional technological glitches and in the discussions in general. Pennington felt the personality of students came through better than expected, so the experience

was not at all impersonal. However, she had not previously developed a print-based course with which to compare her own online verbal style.

Much of the verbal style of web courses is motivational. Ohio University's AnnCorinne Freter-Abrams' Anthropology 101: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (http://cscwww.cats.ohiou.edu/independent/online/anth101/INTRO/TBL.HTM) uses anecdotes about fieldwork, as well as informal, personal, even exclamatory style, to motivate students. Comments from lesson 7, "Kinship and Marriage Systems" include: "Great office I've got, huh?" (Honduran Maya site); "Darn it—a burial!"; "Kinship is fun!". Her web course was based on a print version, with personal photographs and interactive links. Freter-Abrams strives to make the course conversational, using stories to illustrate points, much as she does in the classroom, where such stories are well liked by students (Freter-Abrams 2000).

In another course from Ohio University, Management 200, instructor Jeffrey Anderson expresses excitement and eagerness to work with the students early on ("About the Instructor," http://cscwww.cats.ohiou.edu/independent/online/mgt200/). One lesson actually deals with communication in management, providing links for many key terms such as "feedback."

CONCLUSION

From the literature and the interviews and case studies, there is little evidence that web educators are altering the language of web course to suit adult learners other than employing general motivating devices such as clarity, non-academic prose, interjections, familiarity, humor, netiquette, and encouragement of discussion. In my interviews, faculty had trouble responding to many of the questions about style even when I rephrased or explained them:

1. Few except Egan (2000) had written both print and web courses and thus had this point of comparison. There are hybrids, to be sure, such as Missouri's EL455, which used a modified print-based independent study format to mount both classroom and entirely online courses.

2. Few saw differences in writing styles, whether print vs. web or writing in general vs. web. Many comments pertained rather to student input (anonymity, etc.), which only makes sense in a learner-centered era.

3. The main differences in phraseology or vocabulary are the use of netiquette or an industrial jargon (Egan 2000).

4. Web-specific techniques aimed at adults include flexibility of lesson submission, but this is characteristic of most online delivery.

5. Only some had help from educational theories (e.g., social constructivism) or from instructional designers and editors.

Future studies of web style will undoubtedly focus on student dialog, particularly as instructors grow more and more into the role of facilitators of electronic discussions (see Murphy and Collins 1997 on the conventions of electronic chat).

What will web instructors of the future be like, given that they will have been CMC or web-trained students at one time? Presumably, they will be more empathetic and sympathetic to student needs, and most likely more interested in and adept at interactivity than today's instructors are, but this must be demonstrated.

Learning styles vary among students, but in assessing how well adults learn from web courses, we must ask, "Do we ever really know how well students learn in any environment, including the traditional lecture hall?" To the extent that distance education web courses for adults are clearly written and are supportive of adult needs, we hope that those courses meet learners' needs. How much of distance education web courses aimed at adults is specifically adult and how much is electronic delivery in general may not be apparent for some time, given the worldwide drive to create distance education courses. The language of web instruction, which includes recognizing the need for clarity, is still a new area needing long-term, in-depth studies. Studies will need to answer questions such as: How well do adults learn from reading in print and/or online, and from online discussions or interactive courses? This paper aims to lay some of the groundwork for such studies.

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RETENTION IN ACCELERATED DEGREE-COMPLETION PROGRAMS

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Why do some students leave college while others persist to graduation? Many social scientists have sought answers to this question. A review of retention literature reveals several studies considering adult students in traditional programs. However, there is a gap in the literature when it comes to retention of adult students in accelerated degree-completion programs. This project at Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) seeks to fill this void by testing models of retention with Adult and Professional Studies (APS) students. Questionnaires from withdrawing students are analyzed and compared with graduates. This paper will describe these data, suggest an explanation of retention and implications for practice.

Models of retention

Tinto's (1987) model of undergraduate attrition is considered to be the classic work in the field. He posits that there are individual roots of student departure which are affected by interactional elements found within the institutional structure of the college. Ultimately the decision to leave college is a personal one, but it occurs within an important social context. The student's social interactions within the college context may make or break the decision to leave.

The individual roots of student departure include intention and commitment (Tinto, 1987, p. 39). Students who persist tend to have clear intentions when entering. They intend to pursue a particular field at this particular college and to graduate. They tend to be strongly committed to educational and career goals and committed to the decision to pursue these goals at the given institution.

The intention and commitment of individual students are affected by their subsequent interaction on campus. The four relevant factors of the college experience include adjustment, difficulty, incongruence, and isolation (Tinto, 1987, p. 39). Students who have difficulty adjusting to a new way of life may wish to return to familiar surroundings. Students who have academic or social difficulty may become discouraged and less committed to career goals. Those who find incongruity between their ideals and the reality of life on campus may become less committed. Students may also find incongruity between their personal commitments and the commitments of others on campus. They may feel they do not fit in socially or academically. As a result they may feel socially or intellectually isolated. This will cause them to redefine their commitments and intentions.

According to Tinto's model, when a student has values that are inconsistent to the college, it can produce social isolation and subsequent departure. Does this model have relevance for non-traditional students? Ashar

and Skenes (1993), in studying adult students in a nontraditional program, found that "classes that were professionally more homogeneous, and thus socially more integrated, and smaller classes lost fewer students than less socially integrated and larger classes" (p. 96). So it appears that adults, too, are very dependent on social factors for success in college.

Boshier's congruency model (1973) for adult students is based on similar assumptions as Tinto's model for traditional students. To him, the psychological state of mind of the student is the key to how that student experiences the institution. Boshier sees the incongruence between the participant's intra-self and the self/other as the determinant of leaving. He recognizes that adult students fall into two groups: those who are motivated out of a desire for growth, and those who are motivated because of some perceived personal deficiency. Those who have a "deficiency" motivation will be more affected by social and environmental factors. As they find gratification of lower order needs (completion of a degree, advancement in career) they will be less persistent in education. Those who have a "growth motivation" are likely to desire more education as higher order needs (for new experiences, new ideas, etc.) become fulfilled. This model has been tested in non-credit classes in New Zealand and may also have applications for degree programs in the United States.

Bean and Metzner (1985) examined Tinto's theory in light of empirical studies on non-traditional students and proposed a new model of attrition for adult students. Non-traditional students are distinguished from their traditional counterparts by their intense academic and vocational orientation to college. For them, the traditional social environment of the campus is not nearly as important as the academic offerings. Interaction with faculty and peers are not of the same duration and intensity and thus differ in their influence on attrition. They posit that outside encouragement, from family and community, appear to replace on campus support as a key to retention.

According to Bean and Metzner's model, retention decisions may often be beyond the scope of the institution. This current study challenges this notion. The Bean and Metzner and Boshier models apply to nontraditional students in a traditional college setting. The Adult and Professional Studies Division (APS) at Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) is a nontraditional program designed for an adult student population. Here, interactions with both faculty and peers are intense and vital. This model transforms the faculty role into one of facilitator/mentor rather than lecturer. This fosters close student-faculty relationships. Interaction with peers is also transformed into a vital working relationship. Students must rely on peer relationships for success in study group assignments. This model gives the institution the means to intervene in retention decisions.

Methodology for this study

This study utilizes questionnaires from withdrawing students, and compares them to entering students and graduates of the Adult and Professional Studies Division of Indiana Wesleyan University. Almost all of these respondents were in Business and Management programs at the university.

The withdrawal and graduate surveys were conducted by mail and respondents were anonymous. The withdrawal questionnaires were sent with other forms to sign, completing their withdrawal from the university. During March – June, 2000, 186 withdrawing students completed questionnaires.

The graduates were surveyed as part of an alumni study in Februrary, 2000. A total of 177 graduates completed questionnaires.

Entering students completed a questionnaire in their first class meeting during June, 2000. A total of 155 entering students were surveyed.

Why do adult students come to an accelerated degree program?

Table 1 describes the reasons students have decided to attend college at this point in their lives and why they specifically chose Indiana Wesleyan's Adult and Professional Studies program. These results support national studies done by Johnstone and Rivera (cited in Merriam & Caffarella, 1991) and De Joy (1997) indicating that adults choose to enter education for personal goals/satisfaction, preparation for a career change, and career advancement. The students beginning the APS program indicate that personal satisfaction is their strongest motivator. Career development is a secondary motivator.

These data also support Cross' research (1981) indicating that adults must have educational opportunities conveniently located for them to increase participation. She noted that older, more mature learners are somewhat more likely than younger, less well-established adults to select a program that departs from the traditional. It is clear from these APS data that the convenience of an adult friendly program providing access to accelerated degree completion is a prime motivator for these students.

Why do students drop out of an accelerated adult program?

Table 2 presents data from students withdrawing from the APS program, comparing them to the present student body. It is significant that this program appears to retain race/ethnic minorities and women at the about the same rates as white males. This is interesting in light of all the literature that suggests that these groups tend to be "at risk" in traditional programs (Wise & Fine, 1993; Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Holland and Eisenhart, 1990). Apparently, the characteristics of this program (a cohort model utilizing collaborative learning with close student/faculty relations) removes some of the barriers to achievement for these adult students. Students who are "at risk" in a traditional setting are not the same students who are "at risk" in a non-traditional setting. To find an explanation for attrition in the non-traditional setting, one must look beyond race and gender.

Table 3 gives the responses of withdrawing students on a questionnaire that listed possible reasons for dropping out of college. Most students marked more than one factor contributing to the decision to leave. This indicates that the decision existed within a very complex environment of intervening variables. Students may cite "family responsibilities" or "conflict with job" as their reason for leaving, but this is probably more of a precipitating factor rather than the sole criterion for leaving. For example, a student experiencing family difficulties may or may not decide to leave college depending on the social support found at the

university. Tinto (1987) predicts that a student will become less committed to academic goals if there is incongruence between their perceived needs and the social supports found on campus. It appears this may be true for non-traditional settings as well.

To gain a more complete view of factors related to persistence, Table 4 looks at the motivations and attitudes of withdrawing students, compared to those who graduate. T-tests indicate significant differences in some attitudes. Students who withdraw are significantly less motivated by the convenience factors of the degree (evening classes, location, faster degree completion). One might conjecture that this is what leads them to be less satisfied with some aspects of the program. Students who are highly motivated by the convenience of the program tend to find congruence between their expectations and reality. They are therefore pleased that their personal needs were met by the structure of the program.

It appears these data support the college retention models of Tinto (1987) and Boshier (1973). Students are more successful in this non-traditional adult program if they come in with high motivations producing a high level of commitment to the program. Tinto and Boshier refer to this as congruence between the institution and perceived needs. Tinto suggests that such incongruence may result in a student who psychologically disengages from the academic activities and becomes socially isolated. Successful students are those who are vitally connected to the social environment of the college. For adult students in non-traditional programs this means that students must feel vitally connected to their cohort group. As their cohort becomes an important part of their lives, they are less likely to disengage.

An examination of the timing of withdrawing from the program supports this conceptualization that students are more likely to withdraw when they are not yet vitally connected to their cohort group. Of the withdrawing students, almost half (47.8%) reported they had completed less than four courses. They had not invested the time and energy necessary for strong connections to their program.

It appears then, that social connectivity and community (what Toennies (1963) would call *Gemeinschaft*) is the key to retention in non-traditional programs. An absence of community leads to the self-interest (*Gesellschaft)* of a traditional adult program where students move from one class of nameless faces to another, investing only enough of themselves to get the desired grade.

When students perceive that a non-traditional program reduces barriers to satisfying some vital needs, they are more likely to seek the social connections necessary for success. In the APS program, this means that they will create healthy study group relations. Table 4 indicates one of the biggest differences between drop-outs and graduates is the attitude about study groups. Students who dropped out were probably less connected to their study groups, leading to a lower level of satisfaction. Focus group interviews with persisting nursing students in the APS program revealed that students overwhelmingly cited their study groups as the key to their success (Roeschley & Tweedell, 2000). When social connectivity is not achieved in the study group, the perception of the program diminishes.

Implications for practice

Students' perceptions and expectations upon entering a program are strongly related to their behavior and subsequent evaluation of the program. Students come to accelerated degree completion programs because they perceive them to remove barriers to higher education. Students will persist in these programs if these perceptions are experientially confirmed. Students who become connected to a cohort of students will find that their co-learners help them over the road when it becomes rocky. Students who try to go it alone will find the road treacherous.

What can the institution do to encourage higher retention? It appears that giving attention to the social needs of students might be a good place to start. Adults, like traditional students, need to feel they belong to a group which will support them when things get tough. Faculty can play this role to some extent, but it appears more enduring when it comes from within the cohort model. When a student encounters a personal crisis, the intervention of such a support group is crucial. Even if the student has to "stop out" for a while, an encouraging call from the cohort can help a student re-enter.

Establishing study groups does not guarantee that connectivity and interdependence will occur. Serious attention needs to be given to the process of building social cohesion within groups. Good orientation to the purposes and practices of study groups can lay an important foundation. Periodically placing cohesion-building exercises in the modules can help fuel the fires. Practical instruction on managing group conflicts will promote success not just in the program but in life itself.

Each cohort needs to have a student services advisor, a representative from the institution who will provide a stable, reliable source of information and advice. Such an advisor can also monitor the social-psychological health of the group and intervene when necessary. This will reduce incongruity between expectations and reality.

Another area of attention is to isolate the time frame in which withdrawal is more likely and find ways to intervene. There may be a particularly difficult course that could be revised or rescheduled to reduce its impact on the decision to withdraw. Students who have established a tight support system will be able to withstand a difficulty with greater resilience than students who are not closely connected to the institution.

These are among the strategies that are being implemented in the Adult and Professional Studies Division at Indiana Wesleyan. Attention continues to be given to study group issues with some indication of success. It is hoped that support systems, both within and outside of the classroom, can remove barriers to persistence. Such a vital support system will make a student conclude that there are greater social costs to leaving than to persisting. And if a student must "stop out" for personal reasons, the such a support system will make it more valuable for them to re-enter.

Table 1
Entrance Survey
(n=155)

Why did you choose to get a college degree at this point in your life?
Scale 1 - 5; 5= very important

	Mean	S.D.
Self development	4.44	0.95
Personal satisfaction of having a degree	4.34	1.03
Career advancement	4.28	1.03
Salary increase	4.23	1.11
Need to develop specific skills	3.79	1.11
Job security	3.55	1.35
God's calling in your life	3.40	1.27
Desire to change careers	2.65	1.51
Other	2.58	2.23

Why did you choose IWU?
Scale: 1 - 5; 5 = very important

	Mean	S.D.
Convenience	4.59	0.96
Opportunity of faster degree completion	4.48	0.95
Program specifically designed for adults	4.42	0.97
Accessibility	4.41	1.01
Flexible class hours	4.26	1.11
Academic reputation of IWU	3.67	1.04
Christian world view	3.49	1.29
Study group format	3.48	2.18
Affordability	3.47	1.25
Acceptance of previous college credits	3.31	1.61
Other	2.22	1.92

Table 2
Permanent Withdrawals Compared to Current Students

	FY 98-99 Withdrawals (n=719)	Dec., 1999 Students (n=4427)
Female	56.9%	60.2%
Male	43.1%	39.8%
African American	14.2%	14.1%
White	82.9%	83.2%
Hispanic	1.2%	1.0%
Mean age	35.9	35.7

Table 3
Major Factors in the Decision to Withdraw
(n=186)

Reason	%
Conflict with job	30.6
Family responsibilities	27.7
Personal conflicts with class schedule	26.6
Decided to change majors	15.6
Cost	14.3
Personal problems	13.6
Study group problems	13.3
Family moving	10.9
Pace too fast	8.7
Health related problems	6.9
Decided to attend another college	6.9
Commuting distance too great	6.9
Academic advising inadequate	3.4
Curriculum	3.4
Felt alone or isolated	3.4
Courses not challenging	2.9
Faculty seemed to be of poor quality	1.7
Attitude of staff seemed impersonal	1.1
Classroom facilities	.6

Note: Many students marked more than one item as a "major factor" in the decision to withdraw.

Table 4
Comparison of Drop Outs (n=186) with Graduates (n=177)

Reasons for Attending (scale 1-3; 3=very important)	**Status**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Satisfaction** (scale 1-5; 5 = Excellent)	**Status**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Cost	drop	1.80	0.71	*Program length	drop	3.89	0.95
	grad	1.87	0.65		grad	4.23	0.75
*evening classes	drop	2.65	0.63	Quality of instruction	drop	3.86	1.05
	grad	2.87	0.33		grad	3.94	0.80
Workshop format	drop	2.13	0.72	Overall course content	drop	3.86	1.06
	grad	2.06	0.69		grad	4.00	0.81
Academic rep	drop	2.25	0.64	Interaction with faculty	drop	3.76	1.08
	grad	2.15	0.56		grad	3.90	0.91
Registration	drop	2.28	0.62	Helpfulness of faculty	drop	3.92	1.13
	grad	2.23	0.68		grad	4.02	0.84
*location	drop	2.64	0.58	registration procedures	drop	4.17	0.95
	grad	2.76	0.44		grad	4.30	0.78
Faculty-practitioners	drop	2.18	0.66	Fairness of grading	drop	4.01	1.03
	grad	2.22	0.62		grad	3.93	0.91
Electives	drop	2.08	0.68	*Clarity of degree requirements	drop	4.07	1.03
	grad	1.98	0.68		grad	4.35	0.78
*faster degree completion	drop	2.72	0.51	Academic advising	drop	3.59	1.21
	grad	2.84	0.39		grad	3.73	0.99
Cohort community	drop	1.88	0.72	*Study group concept	drop	3.09	1.39
	grad	1.80	0.63		grad	3.73	1.22
Lockstep program	drop	1.68	0.77	Personal counseling services	drop	3.28	1.13
	grad	1.65	0.67		grad	3.13	0.97
Christian world view	drop	2.16	0.78	*Library and learning resources	drop	3.54	1.16
	grad	2.06	0.70		grad	3.23	1.09
				Financial Aid	drop	3.43	1.20
					grad	3.40	1.00
				Spiritual emphasis	drop	3.87	1.06
					grad	3.76	0.97

* T-tests indicate a significant difference between drop outs and graduates.

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A STUDY OF ADULT LEARNERS' PERSISTENCE AND SUCCESS IN ACCELERATED AND TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS

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This study, supported by a grant from the USA Group Foundation, compares the persistence and success of adult learners at two colleges that are different from each other in format (accelerated vs. traditional), region (West vs. Midwest, U.S.A.), and institutional funding (private vs. public). Two cohorts of adult undergraduate students, 459 students from Regis University (accelerated programs) and 370 students from the University of Missouri at Kansas City (traditional programs), were tracked from Fall of 1993 until Spring of 2000 in order to understand and compare how each group progresses and achieves in these two different systems.

This investigation allows us to establish a larger context for comprehending adult learner academic life in a variety of learning formats. Although comparisons of data are made, the findings do not indicate the superiority of either program due to sampling limitations. Rather, the results of this study are more akin to a cartographic exploration where we can map the territory and better understand how working adults travel in pursuit of their academic goals under differing conditions (academic formats).

Demographic data such as gender, age, and ethnicity were analyzed, compared, and correlated with variables such as degree completion, first-term dropout, long-term persistence, and grade point average. Significant findings include:

- After seven years a higher percentage of students graduate from Regis University (37%) than graduate from UMKC (32%).
- In general, a higher percentage of students graduate sooner from Regis University than from UMKC. Example: After 3 years 27% of students have graduated from Regis while 18% have graduated from UMKC.
- The percent of students dropping out after the first term is higher for UMKC (23%) than for Regis University (12%).
- The grade point average for students from Regis University is higher, and apparently more inflated, than the grade point average for UMKC. Example: While the GPA for 36 percent of graduates from UMKC is between 3.5 and 4.0, the GPA is between 3.5 and 4.0 for 75 percent of the graduates from Regis University.
- Factors positively and significantly associated with degree completion at UMKC are transfer credits and cumulative GPA. Factors positively and significantly associated with degree completion at Regis University are transfer credits, cumulative GPA, and being a woman.
- Factors positively and significantly associated with GPA at UMKC are gender (female), ethnicity (White), and previously attending a 4-year institution.

Factors positively and significantly associated with GPA at Regis University are transfer credits and ethnicity (White).

Assessment of Student Learning: Implications for Teachers and Learners

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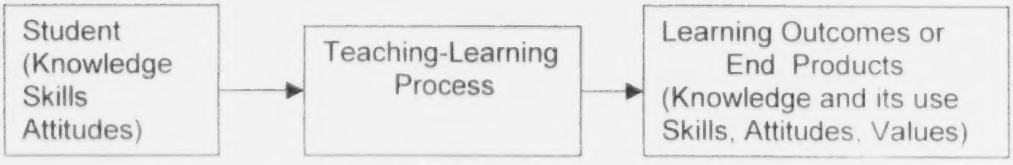
Programmatic and institutional change in adult higher education continues to evolve in concert with the explication of practice standards at those levels (e.g., Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Flint & Associates, 1999; Maehl, 2000; Simosko & Associates, 1988). However, translation of those principles to the teaching-learning enterprise for adult learners at the classroom level has been neither explicit nor driven by coherent models. Nowhere is this more clearly evident than with the issue of assessment of student learning in which the majority of both conceptual and implementation activity is at the institutional level. It is expected that an increased emphasis on assessment within an institution will somehow positively impact student learning, but the means for accomplishing such change are largely unarticulated (for example, see Tucker, 1999). In this paper, I investigate the thesis that a serious commitment to principles embodied in assessment of student learning requires a major retooling of teaching and learning activities. For some learning environments, such revisions may be nothing short of a paradigm shift in conceptualizing teaching and learning at the classroom level. A brief discussion of current models of classroom practice will be followed by an exploration of an assessment-focused conceptual framework for teaching adult learners, illustrated by a case example.

Current Models of Classroom Practice

Models of classroom practice (for either traditional or adult learners) at the undergraduate level typically appear in the form illustrated below:



At least two features of such familiar models need attention. First, the "black-box" nature of the representation of the teaching-learning process adds little to one's understanding of how classroom practice might be defined, or what approaches are likely to be successful. In this depiction, teaching and learning have a mysterious quality, neither teachable nor subject to disciplined inquiry.

From an assessment perspective, however, a second feature of these models is probably more important; that is, their linear nature. Some input from students is entered into the teaching-learning process, emerging as a set of end products, frequently known as learning outcomes. When assessment is of interest, learning outcomes produced by students are typically compared with

hypothetical learning outcomes (or goal states). If student outcomes match goal states, learning is said to have occurred; if student outcomes do not match goal states, a conclusion often reached is that students have failed to learn, or at least have failed to achieve as much learning as was expected of them. Aside from possible resultant political ramifications, such comparisons communicate little information that is of value to students, faculty or the learning environments in which they function. However well-intentioned such assessment activities may have been, individual learners and teachers are not better informed as to how to go about learning, and administrators may find themselves ill-equipped by the assessment data to make programming decisions for which they are responsible. It is not surprising, therefore, that when assessment activities are simply imposed on end products in situations described by comparator models such as the one above, assessment is at risk of becoming little more than a bureaucratic intrusion into the educational experience.

Having identified serious shortcomings of existing models for teaching and learning at the classroom level, one is faced with a need to either repair such models or begin building a different paradigm to serve as a foundation for classroom practice. Because the linearity of current models seriously restricts the type and number of possible modifications, it seems timely to attempt an initial formulation of an alternative conceptual framework.

Assessment of Student Learning: A Conceptual Framework for Classroom Practice with Adult Learners

Assessment of Student Learning is a phrase used with such regularity that its familiarity often obscures the significance of its component concepts: assessment, student, learning. An appreciation of those components would seem to be at the very core of successful classroom practice with adult learners. The discussion that follows is a brief, beginning exploration; it is neither definitive nor does it contain highly refined ideas. Rather, what follows is one teacher's attempt to construct a more rational foundation, grounded in empirical research and theory, for classroom practice. Also, to meet prescribed space constraints, much of the discussion that follows will focus on cognitive aspects of the teaching-learning enterprise; clearly, other dimensions are not only involved, but require consideration in a full explication of a conceptual model for classroom work with adult learners.

Learning. Many aspects of the science of learning have direct applications to classroom practices with adults (see Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Maehl, 2000 for more elaborative discussions). Two of those aspects will be considered here: the learning-performance distinction and transfer of learning.

Except for radical behaviorists (e.g., Skinner, 1954), learning scientists have long held a distinction between learning and performance. Learning is a

complex set of processes that, with practice, over time, produce change in an organism. Performance refers to observable responses made in particular settings. Performance measures are used to index learning, but can also be influenced by variables such as motivation, fatigue or motor skill development. When the learning-performance distinction is applied in any particular course, students are given options for how they will demonstrate their learning, and descriptions of learning outcomes are clearly differentiated from their related performance measures.

Similarly, transfer of learning, the ability to take what one has learned from one situation and use it in a different contextual setting) has intrigued scientists for years (see Bransford et al., 1999, for a succinct historical review). Transfer is difficult to obtain, but it is clearly a critical element in the successful completion of many human learning tasks, including goals of adult higher education (e.g., development of adaptive functioning; preparation for life-long learning). Achievement of these goals requires work closely resembling features defining adaptive expertise (Hatano & Inagake, 1986, cited in Bransford et al., 1999, p. 36). An element shared by transfer of learning and adaptive expertise is the organization of knowledge in ways that permit an individual to remain flexible in new situations, capable of using prior knowledge or skills to make adaptive responses. Once adult learning is conceptualized as the development of adaptive expertise, then the task of students and teachers can be easily described: their work is to change the agency (Glaser, 1996) of learning. Early in acquisition of expertise, learning is under a considerable amount of external control. With practice over time and assistance to progress through a transitional period, it is expected that a developing expert will replace external control of learning with self-regulation. Thus, the work of teaching is first, to provide novices with the external supports needed to produce desired behaviors, then, to make practice opportunities available for rehearsal of those behaviors, and finally, to extend the cognitive and affective support needed to successfully transform a student into a developing expert.

Student. Although adult learners are undeniably a diverse group, from a cognitive-developmental perspective, there are two features that are likely to characterize most adults found in higher education programs. First, their thinking is likely to be postformal (Kramer, 1983) in nature, and second, they can be described as having encapsulated cognition (Rybash, Hoyer, & Roodin, 1986).

Postformal thinking can be conceptualized from several perspectives (see Rybash, Roodin & Hoyer,1995 for a review), but features common to those perspectives are that postformal thinkers are able to think relativistically, are capable of problem-finding as well as problem solving, and can do dialectical reasoning. Moreover, adults are likely to take a contextual approach (Rybash et al., 1995, p.172) to problem finding and problem solving, so that they can generate principles from the changing contexts in which they find themselves

functioning. Thus, they have moved beyond the need to apply absolute standards across a universe of situations and contexts.

Just as there are "conceptual barriers" that vary from discipline to discipline (Bransford et al., 1999, p. 144), there are conceptual barriers that are different for adult learners than for younger students. When it is found in adults, postformal thinking tends to be domain specific; that is, it relates to a particular body of knowledge and skills, rather than being a strategy that can be quickly and easily invoked in a wide variety of settings. Moreover, research (e.g., Rybash et al, 1986) on adult cognition provides increasing evidence that postformal thinking tends to be not only domain specific, but encapsulated within a domain. Encapsulation permits the development of an elaborated hierarchy of of accessible knowledge as well as the development of expertise in knowledge use. However, outside the encapsulated domain, acquisition of new, unrelated knowledge is quite inefficient, unless it can somehow be connected (perhaps in dialectic fashion) to encapsulated information and cognitive skills.

Finally, it is necessary to recall that throughout the lifespan, modification of cognitive structures, or accommodation (Piaget, 1972) requires effort and deliberate practice over time (Ericsson, 1996). It seems unlikely, therefore, that adult learners should be expected to spontaneously adopt new cognitive strategies in the course of acquiring new domain knowledge, particularly when that acquisition is a part of a demanding higher education program.

Assessment. When assessment is implemented from a perspective typically taken by professionals in fields as diverse as health care, law or engineering, it has two aspects not found in the linear models discussed earlier: assessment is an ongoing process rather than a discrete event, and assessment produces a summary description of a person's (or group's) status (sometimes called a diagnosis or problem formulation) with a recommendation for strategies or options the individual (group) might use to bring about growth, development or improvement. This description focuses on the person doing the assessment as a consultant to the individual (group) being assessed. Thus, recommendations from teachers for changes in learning behaviors need to take on the quality of opportunities, choices or options that students may or may not choose to invoke. This aspect of the learning process is clearly part of the familiar consumer model of adult education, but it may be a relatively unfamiliar idea to faculty who are new to adult education settings. Sometimes, even adult learners may not be cognizant of their client (or consumer) role in the educational process. The teacher-consultant who guides assessment activities also needs to educate learners about the consultation process.

Finally, a similar approach to assessment has been developed by Alverno College (1994, for example), although the logical and philosophical journey leading to the assessment perspective is quite different. Such an observation is

a reminder that there are likely to be multiple paths to achieving a desired outcome of making assessment a more integral part of classroom practice.

An Illustrative Case Study

Although the case study on which I am reporting is still in progress, I believe there is sufficient data to illustrate the conceptual framework outlined above and to begin to inform a model of classroom activity. Also, this discussion addresses only a very limited sample of operative variables in the case.

For several years, I have had the privilege of teaching in the Human Development major of the GOAL (Gains of Adult Learning) Program, an accelerated, cohort-based, degree-completion program for adults at North Park University. Usually, students begin the program by entering the eight-course sequence of the major as a cohort (Group Dynamics, Focused Writing, Child Development, Adult Development, Psychobiology, Personality, Learning and Social/Cultural Contexts of Development). Four additional courses (Statistics and Research, Tests and Measurement, Abnormal Psychology, Counseling Psychology) comprise an optional pre-professional sequence designed primarily for students interested in pursuing graduate work. My teaching assignments have been the courses in Psychobiology (about halfway through the major) and Abnormal Psychology (taken after the major has been completed). Both courses focus on understanding knowledge rather than memorizing content. Likewise, students have been expected to be (and assisted to become) active learners.

Classroom techniques have typically included discussion that maps student interests and knowledge onto course content, dialogue with the instructor to clarify unclear or difficult concepts, student participation in demonstrations to illustrate important concepts, opportunities for students to explore applications of content in real-world or simulated examples, and performance options for meeting learning outcomes. Weekly written assignments require content application to help expand students' repertoire of written communication skills at the same time they are increasing their understanding of domain knowledge. Overall, students have expressed satisfaction with these courses, are pleased with what and how they have learned, and can identify learning outcomes they have mastered.

In Psychobiology, students have often struggled with the writing assignments, explaining that the scientific concepts were unfamiliar (for the most part) and difficult to master, thus making their application in written assignments difficult. In response to (and in anticipation of) these struggles, I have typically used a combination of expert models and specific feedback to help students learn knowledge application skills in preparing their written work. When some of these students have later enrolled in Abnormal Psychology, I have observed that the same students who had difficulty applying psychobiological concepts in their written assignments were also the ones that seemed to have the most difficulty

connecting psychobiology with related topics in abnormal behavior. My response has been to search for "better" ways of working around or over the barriers students identify as part of their attempts to understand psychobiological content.

About six months ago, I had my first opportunity to teach the Adult Development course that immediately precedes the Psychobiology course. Among the activities in that Adult Development course were two large written assignments requiring integration of course content and its application to real-life examples. Each assignment was to be prepared in draft version with feedback from the instructor with a final version due near the end of the course. In the Focused Writing course in the previous semester, these students had been introduced to the Kolb (1984) Model Essay and had completed some assignments in which they used the Kolb sequence of describing concrete experience, performing reflective observation on the experience, generating general concepts, and testing those general concepts in new situations.

Although most students in this cohort had a very rich experiential knowledge base in adult development, relevant developmental theory and research information was quite new to them. When these students were asked to write (either in or outside class sessions), they too, often struggled with how to apply theory or research concepts to real-life experience! Having noticed this, I began, on the fourth week of the course (in a seven-week sequence), to give weekly quizzes that included two kinds of questions from each content area. One set of questions (on the psychosocial development in middle adulthood, for example) focused on theoretical or research information in a factual or conceptual way, but did not require application to real-life or simulated situations. The other set of questions did require such an application. For the most part, students who did well on the application quiz questions could also apply similar concepts in their written work (regardless of their composition mechanics); students who struggled with application concepts in their written work also had difficulty with the application questions on quizzes. Finally, when I questioned students about their use of the Kolb Model Essay, almost all viewed it simply as a format for organizing their written expressions of information.

As I pondered my experience with this cohort, several ideas became clear. First, the issue of students having difficulty applying theoretical and research information to real-life examples was not limited either to psychobiological content or to writing performance. Moreover, struggles in content application were not determined solely by content difficulty; quiz items focused entirely on abstract information could be mastered, but the application of that same content proved to be more troublesome. Certainly, most in this group of adult learners (and probably others I had known) were not spontaneously connecting their experiential knowledge with the theoretical knowledge found in assigned reading and/or class discussion. A dissociation of experiential and theoretical knowledge could also account for students' difficulty in retrieving information needed for long-term transfers exemplified in the connections expected between the

Psychobiology and Abnormal Psychology courses. There was also a considerable amount of variation in students' skill in assessing their own performance; many produced very global self-assessments that were not particularly helpful in guiding them toward skill improvement. Students needed a way of gaining control over the process of developing new cognitive strategies, thus decreasing frustration that accompanied the aforementioned struggles and optimizing their capacity for learning.

Why might dissociation between experiential knowledge and theoretical knowledge appear in adult learners? What can a teacher do to bridge that dissociation? If designed, can students acquire such bridging strategies in a compressed course spanning only seven weeks? How can bridging strategies build on skills and experiences students already have, rather than introducing yet another unfamiliar scheme into their learning environment? I continued to ponder such questions as I prepared to work with this cohort in the Psychobiology course, trying as best I could to help them bridge the gap between their experiential and theoretical knowledge. At this point, an opportunity developed for me to teach the Adult Development course with the next student cohort. In preparation for that assignment, my immediate need was to develop a conceptual framework for instructional strategies that had a chance of reducing students' cognitive dissociation.

Many adult learners who have had little recent experience in higher education prior to entering a degree-completion program may well exhibit a considerable amount of dissociation between experiential and theoretical information. Theoretical knowledge is likely to be limited in extent, may not have been acquired or stored in a manner that facilitates easy access, and as a result of experience in the real world, its potential utility may not be highly valued. Simply put, theoretical knowledge, "school learning", is often perceived as having a frivolous nature. Thus, there is little expectation that it will be valuable in dealing with real-world issues; when such connections do happen, they are accompanied by an element of cognitive surprise. Experiential knowledge is not only greater in extent than is theoretical knowledge, but it has become encapsulated (Rybash et al., 1986) with relevant processing skills into fairly circumscribed domains of expertise, limiting the possibilities for its nondeliberate (or automatic) transfer to other domains. Consequently, adult learners may be surprised to find that their substantial experiential base has value in the academic world. However, attempts to mobilize that experiential knowledge in meaningful ways in an academic setting may be frustrated by the operation of some fairly formidable cognitive barriers. Two such barriers may be a limited understanding of the need for, as well as how to go about developing specific cognitive strategies to utilize their experience, and a well-conditioned tendency to separate experiential and theoretical knowledge. However, if adult learners are to acquire postformal thinking skills as a part of their experience in higher education, then their teachers must find ways of circumventing such cognitive barriers, just as engineers and architects find ways to circumvent barriers in the

physical world. Cognitive strategies represent one class of interventions likely to accomplish such barrier demolition, but acquisition of cognitive strategies requires effort and deliberate practice over time. Finally, in order to be active learners, students need to be aware of the cognitive changes they are being encouraged to make in their journey toward expertise.

With the concepts outlined above in mind, the course structure designed for the second cohort in Adult Development included these elements:

- Explicit discussion about a cognitive dissociation of experiential and theoretical knowledge, why and how it would be desirable to bridge or prevent such dissociation;
- Presentation of the Kolb Model Essay as a set of strategies for clarifying, organizing, and connecting one's experiential and theoretical knowledge;
- A detailed set of questions to consider in implementing the Kolb Model Essay in each particular assignment;
- Specific self-assessment activities with each assignment, focused on particular skills;
- Opportunities in class sessions for student-directed discussion of their experiences with connecting theoretical and experiential knowledge including obtaining peer and teacher support;
- Use of participant observation techniques as a methodology for collecting data about adult development in the real world
- Three brief written assignments designed solely for practice with participant observation and implementation techniques incorporated in the Kolb Model;
- Explicit reformulation of existing writing assignments to comply with the Kolb Model structure. These assignments continued to be written in draft form, and were assigned near the end of the course.

Students in this cohort are currently in the Psychobiology course, and continue to use the Kolb Model Essay as a scaffold for connecting theoretical concepts with their experience. Only summary comments about their accomplishments can be made in the space allotted. All students could make application of theoretical content to real-life examples by the end of the Adult Development course, as demonstrated by their performance on written assignments, classroom discussion and quizzes. All students had increased the specificity and precision of their self-assessments, although there was more variability among students with regard to their self-assessments than there was for connecting theoretical and experiential knowledge. It is also interesting that in the current Psychobiology course are two students who were in the first of the two Adult Development courses I taught. These students, who did not have the benefit of explicit instruction and guided rehearsal in the use of the Kolb Model as a cognitive bridging strategy, have struggled mightily to accomplish the connection between psychobiological theory and real-world experience. Certainly, a variety of factors other than cognitive scaffolding could account for

the observed differences in the two subgroups' performance, but it is a striking difference, nonetheless.

Readers familiar with the Kolb (1984) Model Essay will observe that information in the Case Study narrative was presented in the Kolb Model as well. Concrete experience, reflective observation, formulation of general concepts and testing in new situations can be easily identified in the assessment process used to describe and facilitate students' acquisition of learning skills. The same cognitive activities that were recommended for students to use in bridging the gap between their experiential and theoretical knowledge stores had also worked for me!

Discussion

Quite aside from the particular learning issues that were identified for the student cohort in the case study, it does seem reasonable to make several generalizations. First, assessment of student learning can provide a conceptual framework for classroom practice, guiding teacher-learner activities on a daily basis. Students can also successfully use and experience (within a relatively short time period) some benefits of interventions derived from an assessment process in which they actively participated. Several components can be considered for incorporation into a model of the teaching-learning process: teacher as consultant, teacher as architect of cognitive structure, teacher as engineer supervising the implementation of cognitive strategies, and teacher as coach, encouraging, supervising and supporting the developing of beginning expertise. Finally, it appears that the Kolb Model Essay is a worthy candidate for a disciplined methodology for faculty to use in examining their own practice, and at the same time, provide expert modeling in its use for students. From this initial demonstration, it is possible to propose additional elements appropriate for a model of classroom practice with adult learners and to put such a model to an empirical test.

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Persistence on a Smaller, More Diverse Scale: A Case Study Following Up on the 1999 New England Adult Research Network's "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Programs"

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At the 1999 ACE/Alliance Conference, the New England Adult Research Network's NEAR Net Collaborative Research Group (NEAR Net) presented the result of their study on adult student persistence. Their "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Programs" study grew out of NEAR Net members understandings of the position of adult programs at many institutions. They perceived that "adults often receive marginal recognition and service..., and that programs for adults are usually the first to be cut in difficult times." They hoped to find data that would show their home institutions the "market value" of adult learners.[1] They used a number of surveys and interviews distributed to six New England institutions. The study was completed in 1997. The results are interesting and informative, but lacking if they are seen as a representation of ALL adult students. As the NEAR Net respondent data pool was 94% self-identified White Non-Hispanic, a significant portion of adult students was not included in this study.[2]

This lack of diversity raises some questions. Is NEAR Net's data applicable to adult students of color? Are there different persistence factors among adult students of color? What institutional services are important to adult students of color? Where do adult students of color find support? What techniques of teaching and learning are more effective among adult students of color?

In the scope of this presentation, the questions of persistence factors among adult students of color, institutional services and support will be addressed. The final question regarding techniques of teaching and learning effectiveness was included in the research conducted for this project, but due to the time restrictions of this venue will not be covered in this presentation. The research data is available to anyone interested.

Method

North Park University's Gains of Adult Learning (GOAL) Program, an accelerated bachelors degree completion program, offers a smaller, but much more diverse data pool. The GOAL Program's current enrollment of 265 students is composed of 49% adult students of color.[3] While limited by its data pool size, a GOAL Program case study using the NEAR Net survey can provide new avenues of inquiry not found in the original study.

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[1] NEAR Net Collaborative Research Group, "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Programs," (New England Adult Research Network, 1999), 1.
[2] Ibid., 42.
[3] One hundred thirty surveys were distributed in January 2000. Twenty-seven were returned.

Using NEAR Net's "Adults and College Choices – A Survey," appropriate GOAL students were surveyed in January 2000.[4] The survey was central to the quantitative portion of the original study.[5] There were four sets of questions in the survey:

- Seven question sets, each requiring use of a Likert scale for rating responses
- Three closed-response questions on satisfaction, relevance and challenge
- Twenty closed-response questions focused on demographic issues
- Four open-ended questions to be answered in short paragraph form[6]

Minor modifications were made to fit GOAL's setting, but as per NEAR Net's criteria, all students surveyed were at least twenty-five years old, had been enrolled for at least one year and were enrolled at least part time at the time of the survey.[7] The survey respondents closely reflected GOAL's overall racial/ethnic demographic with respondents dividing into the following categories:

- White Non-Hispanic – 37%
- Black Non-Hispanic – 33%
- Hispanic – 7%
- International – 4%
- Other – 15%[8]

For the purposes of this paper only a portion of the data collected will be discussed. The bulk of this presentation will focus on the responses to the first question set. Responses to the second question set will be briefly addressed. Demographic data from the GOAL survey will be instrumental in making the comparison between the two works. The four open-ended questions were asked of GOAL students, but that data will not be addressed at this time.

COMPARISON – NEAR NET AND ALL GOAL

In general, ALL GOAL student responses to the NEAR Net survey were not radically different from the original findings. A glance at the first four Likert scale question sets revealed only a handful of areas where any real degree of difference occurred. In the first question set, which focused on reasons why adults attend college at this time in their lives, GOAL students rated the same four items for their top reasons as did NEAR Net's respondents.

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[4] Ibid., 50-53.
[5] Ibid., 14.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., 2.
[8] Racial/ethnic categories offered in the NEAR Net study were American Indian/Alaskan, Asian/Pacific, White/Non-Hispanic, Black/Non-Hispanic, and Hispanic. The GOAL survey included the additional categories of Other and International. There were no GOAL respondents who self-identified as American Indian/Alaskan or Asian/Pacific. There was one GOAL respondents who did not self-identify any racial/ethnic category.

	NEAR NET[9]	ALL GOAL
Gain knowledge/improve skills	99%	100%
Enrichment/personal growth	97%	96%
Earn a degree	95%	94%
Career advancement	93%	93%

The differences in the "attending" question set occurred in the second ranked responses.

	NEAR NET[10]	ALL GOAL
Career change	86%	70%
Salary inequity	81%	71%

It would appear on the surface that ALL GOAL students are slightly less likely to be attending college at this time because of career related issues. As will be discussed later, there are racial/ethnic differences in these two categories.

The second question set focused on reasons for remaining in school. Examination of NEAR Net's top list, showed little difference.

	NEAR NET[11]	ALL GOAL
Flexible scheduling	98%	96%
Accredited college	98%	100%
Accept previous credits	98%	96%
Independent study/distance learning	98%	54%
Affordable	94%	85%
Supportive advising	92%	100%
Approach to learning	91%	96%

ALL GOAL's top responses were not identical to those of the original study and will be discussed later in this paper.

The only significant difference was found in the "Independent study/distance learning" category. In the NEAR Net study there was "a marked degree of variation" in this category based upon the variety of institutions participating.[12] As the GOAL Program does not offer any on-line courses, the ALL GOAL response variance is not significant for the purposes of this comparison. As discussed later, there is a significant comparison to be found in this category based on differences of race/ethnicity.

The third question set dealt with the importance of various institutional services. While the ALL GOAL responses to NEAR Net's top four did not show much variance, two second ranked services, Financial Aid and Business Office,

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[9] NEAR Net Collaborative Research Group, "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Programs," 14.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 15-16.
[12] Ibid., 16.

did show a slight variance worth noting mainly for highlighting the later race/ethnic based differences.

	NEAR NET[13]	ALL GOAL
Course scheduling	98%	90%
Advising	95%	96%
Registration	92%	96%
Library	90%	93%
Business Office	81%	93%
Financial Aid	93%	78%

It is possible that the variances found in the Business Office and Financial Aid categories reflected the number of GOAL students who are receiving financial aid compared to those who are receiving employer reimbursement. At North Park University, financial aid is a function of the Admissions Office not the Business Office. Therefore while all students would need to interact with the Business Office, they would not necessarily have to deal with the Financial Aid Office.

The fourth question set addressed the issue of support. It was in this set that the largest variance between NEAR Net and ALL GOAL appeared. The rankings listed below are those categories chosen by NEAR Net as being the most important in terms of adult student support. NEAR Net expressed a concern that there may have been some confusion on the part of respondents due to the overlapping nature of some categories listed in this question set. In particular, they raised up "Advisor," "Mentor," and "Faculty" as being categories, which depending upon the institution attended, may have been difficult for students to rank because of their intertwining nature. They posited that this confusion may have contributed to the low ranking received by these categories, which did not make it into the top eight support responses.

The GOAL survey avoided this potential confusion. First, the category of "Counselor" was modified to read "Counselor/Therapist" in order to differentiate it from the "Advisor" category. This change may have altered the comparison potential between the two surveys in these particular categories. Second, the GOAL Program uses professional academic advisors, instead of faculty academic advisors. This institutional difference led to a significant variance between survey results. The number one support found among ALL GOAL students was the Advisor with a 100% importance ranking.

	NEAR NET[14]	ALL GOAL
(Advisor)	(not ranked)	(100%)
Fellow learner	97%	88%
Children	97%	53%
Friend	96%	88%
Faculty	96%	96%

[13] Ibid., 17.
[14] Ibid., 19.

Spouse/Significant Other	95%	73%
Counselor	94%	29%
Employer	87%	66%
Administrative staff at college	86%	86%

The importance of family support, especially that of Spouses/Significant Other and Children, is evident in the higher ranking these categories received in the NEAR Net results. Yet for ALL GOAL students these were the very categories receiving low rankings. Also receiving lower ranking than in the original study were the categories of Employer, Fellow learner and Friend.

In the demographic comparison, ALL GOAL students have fewer children, but more of them live at home than do their NEAR Net counterparts. ALL GOAL students also have more dependent parents at home. The variance in Spouse/Significant Other support among ALL GOAL students may be attributed to the differences in marital status found in these two surveys.

	NEAR NET[15]	ALL GOAL
Married	59%	52%
Single	18%	30%
Divorced	19%	11%
Widowed	2%	0%
Separated	3%	7%

ALL GOAL students are almost twice as likely to be single or separated than are NEAR Net respondents. This would definitely impact the amount of support a GOAL student would/could receive from either a Spouse/Significant Other and/or Children.

NEAR Net's respondents reported a 92% employed rating, which corresponded well to GOAL's 94%.[16] So the lower rating of Employer support from ALL GOAL respondents may reflect variance among employers or lack of expectations on the part of ALL GOAL respondents. The similar low ranking among the categories, Fellow Learner and Friend, suggest that college for ALL GOAL students is a more self-dependent undertaking than NEAR Net's respondents. It also suggests that ALL GOAL students rely more heavily upon the institution for support. In addition, it is clear that there is a critical relationship between the student and the academic advisor in terms of GOAL student persistence.

COMPARSION – NEAR NET, GOAL WHITE NON-HISPANIC, GOAL STUDENTS OF COLOR

The real differences between these surveys emerge when the comparison made is expanded to include race/ethnicity based variables. In some categories, GOAL students regardless of race/ethnicity responded identically to or very near

[15] Ibid., 42.

[16] Koby Lee, "GOAL Program: Mission Fit or Cash Cow?," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Christian Adult Higher Education Association, Braintree, MA, August 2000, 5.

to their NEAR Net counterparts. This was especially true when all of the responses within the "Important" rankings were factored together as they were in the original survey. By examining the variations found within the "Important" rankings, i.e. by separating out the responses found in the "Extremely Important," "Quite Important," and "Important" ratings, distinct differences based on race/ethnicity emerge. Making this expansion and looking at the same four question sets discussed above exposes some of the additional persistence challenges faced by adult students of color.

Question Set One – Reasons for Attending College at this Time.

In the first question set focused on attending college at this point in life, examination of the other importance categories offered, as well as NEAR Net's top four, revealed a different set of concerns for adult students of color. The number one reason for attending at this time remained the same. Both NEAR Net's and GOAL's response, regardless of race/ethnicity, was "Gain knowledge/Improve skills." Even when broken down into the various categories of importance, there was very little difference based on race/ethnicity.

NEAR Net's second ranked and GOAL's third ranked reason, "Enrichment/Personal growth," had in its combined form only a one percent difference. Breaking it down by race/ethnicity revealed a six percent variance. But further division by importance ranking exposed a large degree of variance between White Non-Hispanic and Students of Color.

ENRICHMENT/PERSONAL GROWTH	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	80%	58%
Quite Important	10%	18%
Important	10%	18%
Not Important	0%	6%

By breaking this response down, it becomes quite clear that GOAL Students of Color are less committed to this reason for attending college at this time. It is important, but not nearly as important to GOAL Students of Color as to White Non-Hispanic GOAL students.

NEAR Net's third ranked and GOAL second ranked reason for attending was "Earn a degree." In the combined importance rating, the GOAL rating was 100% regardless of race/ethnicity. But when broken down into the importance components, differences emerge.

EARN A DEGREE	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	100%	82%
Quite Important	0%	12%
Important	0%	6%

An 18% variance may not be statistically huge, but it does raise concerns about the focus of almost 20% of GOAL's Students of Color. What is the persistence motivation for this group if the degree itself is not?

NEAR Net's and GOAL's fourth ranked reason was "Career Advancement." The combined rate was identical to NEAR Net's. But a twenty percent variance emerged when race/ethnicity was examined. Only 80% of White Non-Hispanic GOAL students considered "Career Advancement" to be an important reason for attending college at this time in their lives versus 100% of GOAL's Students of Color. Further differences were found when all categories of importance were examined.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	60%	70%
Quite Important	10%	18%
Important	10%	12%
Not Important	20%	0%

Overall White Non-Hispanic GOAL students found this category to be less important than their GOAL Students of Color. A supposition can be raised that White Non-Hispanic GOAL students may already be in careers and, that GOAL Students of Color may be looking for careers.

This can be supported by further examination of the second tiered categories of "Career change" and "Salary inequity." The overall variance between groups in the "Career change" category was only 16%. A comparison of the expanded importance ratings revealed a much more complex response.

CAREER CHANGE	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	60%	24%
Quite Important	0%	34%
Important	0%	18%
Not Important	10%	12%
Not Applicable	30%	12%

While the importance rankings were of interest, it was the last two categories of rating that help shed additional light on the career issue. White Non-Hispanic GOAL students were almost twice as likely to not be considering their education as a means for changing careers. Conceivably, GOAL Students of Color have higher expectations of change occurring in their lives upon completion of their education.

On its own, the "Salary inequity" category raised few concerns. An equal percentage of respondents found this category to be unimportant or not applicable to their attending college at this time. There was little variance between the importance rankings for either group as well. But in combination with the previous data and the questions surrounding GOAL Students of Color's educational expectations, avenues of interest arose. If White Non-Hispanic GOAL students were not looking to change careers upon completion of their

education, the premise could be made that they were currently satisfied in their jobs. Correspondingly, if fewer White Non-Hispanic GOAL students were interested in attending college for career advancement, then it is possible that they are satisfied with their current salaries. On the other hand, if GOAL Students of Color are looking at education as the avenue to advancement or change in their careers, then their lack of concern over salary inequity may be associated with future expectations of increased monetary rewards, when their education is completed and they have moved up.

Question Set Two – Reasons for Remaining in College

As mentioned earlier, the second question set on reasons for remaining in college resulted in different top four rankings for NEAR Net and ALL GOAL.

NEAR Net's top four reasons with identical ratings of 98%

- Accredited college
- Acceptance of previous credits
- Flexible scheduling
- Independent study/distance learning

ALL GOAL's top four with identical ratings of 100%

- Accelerated study
- Accredited college
- Reputation
- Supportive advising

Of note was that only one of NEAR Net's top four, "Accredited college," appeared in the ALL GOAL top four. It was also of interest that two of GOAL's top four reasons focused on the institution and two reasons were student centered. For NEAR Net, only one reason was focused on the institution. Their other responses focused on student-centered issues. This raised a question regarding the comfort level/knowledge base of higher education institutional procedures. If an adult student is the first in his/her family to enter college, her/his comfort level/knowledge base may focus on different areas of concern, than the adult student whose family structure includes a history in higher education. Further study in this area would be of interest in understanding persistence among adult students.

GOAL's Top Four Reasons

The GOAL Program operates on an accelerated schedule where students attend class one evening or Saturday per week for four hours. Courses run for seven weeks. The GOAL Program's format is one of its strongest attractions. Therefore it was not surprising to find Accelerated Study in the top four. Of interest though was the difference between the two groups of students.

ACCELERATED STUDY	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	60%	75%

Quite Important	40%	6%
Important	0%	19%

While it was clear that the ability to quickly complete their degree was of importance to both groups, there were distinct differences in how important. At first glance, it appeared that Students of Color were more concerned about completing their degrees quickly, with a 15 % higher "Extremely Important" rating than White Non-Hispanic GOAL students. But the breakdown showed an interesting difference in the second and third tier responses. Proportionally White Non-Hispanic GOAL students were more concerned about the opportunity to complete their degree quickly than were GOAL Students of Color.

The "Accredited College" category was the only reason found on both surveys top four. Again this was a reason important to both groups of GOAL students. The differences in the breakdown showed that GOAL Students of Color were slightly more concerned about accreditation, than were White Non-Hispanic GOAL students.

ACCREDITED COLLEGE	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	60%	76%
Quite Important	30%	24%
Important	10%	0%

On the surface, this response does not highlight a substantial difference between groups, but when combined with other elements found in the survey responses, it points to a possible heightened level of concern among GOAL Students of Color.

Considering the level of concern raised about accreditation, it was a surprise to find that "Reputation" was not as much of a concern for either group. It was still important, but more so to White Non-Hispanic GOAL students. GOAL Students of Color were substantially more concerned about whether or not the institution was accredited.

REPUTATION	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	50%	12%
Quite Important	20%	35%
Important	30%	53%

These variances may be based partly on the knowledge base of each group in terms of its familiarity with higher education. In comparison to NEAR Net's respondents, ALL GOAL respondents had fewer parents/primary guardian and/or children who had finished college.

PARENTS/PRIMARY GUARDIAN - COLLEGE	YES	NO
NEAR Net[17]	31%	69%
ALL GOAL	22%	78%

[17] NEAR Net Collaborative Research Group, "Factors Influencing Adult Student Persistence in Undergraduate Degree Programs," 43.

White Non-Hispanic GOAL	30%	70%
GOAL Students of Color	18%	82%

CHILDREN – COLLEGE	YES	NO
NEAR Net[18]	18%	34%
ALL GOAL	11%	32%
White Non-Hispanic GOAL	10%	20%
GOAL Students of Color	12%	35%

Breaking the responses down by race/ethnicity revealed a further distinction between groups. While GOAL Students of Color had more children who had finished college than did White Non-Hispanic GOAL students, they had fewer parents/primary guardians who had finished college. This would speak to a different knowledge base and experience level in regard to higher education between groups.

The category of "Supportive Advising" did not make it into NEAR Net's list of reasons for remaining in college at this time. For GOAL students it was a major area of concern and rated high in all question sets. The variance between GOAL students showed a significant difference based on race/ethnicity. In the "Extremely Important" category, GOAL Students of Color rated "Supportive Advising" over twice as important as did White Non-Hispanic GOAL students.

SUPPORTIVE ADVISING	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	30%	62%
Quite Important	30%	19%
Important	40%	19%

Question Set Three – Importance of Services

All GOAL's most important ranked services varied from NEAR Net's, where the number one service was "Course Scheduling." The number one ranked service for ALL GOAL was a three way tie with "Admissions," "Registration," and "Advising," all at 96%. A tie followed them between "Business Office" and "Library," at 93%. "Course Scheduling" appeared in the number six slot with 90%.

There was a slight variance based on race/ethnicity in the "Admissions" category. Six percent of GOAL Students of Color ranked this category as "Not Important," as compared to zero percent of their White Non-Hispanic peers.

The categories of "Registration" and "Advising," also showed a six to zero percent rating of "Not Important." But a closer examination of the importance rankings offered additional insights.

REGISTRATION	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	20%	56%
Quite Important	50%	25%
Important	30%	13%

[18] Ibid.

Not Important	0%	6%

GOAL Students of Color found "Registration" to be almost three times as "Extremely Important" as did White Non-Hispanic GOAL students. The questions that arose here centered around the expectations of Students of Color. Do Students of Color expect more difficulty in the registration process? Do they experience the registration process differently? What is their comfort level/base of experience with this process?

ADVISING	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	40%	64%
Quite Important	30%	24%
Important	30%	6%
Not Important	0%	6%

While overall, White Non-Hispanic GOAL students rated "Advising" higher, GOAL Students of Color gave it a higher "Extremely Important" rating. This higher rating may come from a heightened sense of concern over academic success among GOAL Students of Color.

Question Set Four – Support

ALL GOAL's top four support persons were not the same as NEAR Net's top four.

TOP FOUR SUPPORT PERSONS

NEAR NET		ALL GOAL	
Fellow Learner	97%	Advisor	100%
Children	97%	Faculty	96%
Friend	96%	Fellow Learner	88%
Faculty	96%	Friend	88%

As pointed out earlier, familial support was not as important for ALL GOAL students as for NEAR Net respondents. It was clear that ALL GOAL students expected more support from the institution than did NEAR Net students, whose only listed one institutional category in their top four. Further racial/ethnic breakdown of ALL GOAL responses confirmed the importance of this institutional support network among both groups.

ADVISOR	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	40%	47%
Quite Important	10%	23%
Important	50%	24%

FACULTY	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	40%	38%
Quite Important	50%	19%

Important	10%	37%

The real variances between these groups appeared in the non-institutional categories.

FELLOW LEARNER	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	50%	31%
Quite Important	40%	13%
Important	10%	37%

It was clear that GOAL Students of Color were less likely to see their classmates as support resources. Considering that the GOAL Program operates on a cohort-based model that encourages peer support, this difference raised questions about the success of the method with adult students of color.

FRIEND	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	STUDENTS OF COLOR
Extremely Important	30%	25%
Quite Important	40%	19%
Important	20%	43%

Differences in the "Friend" category may relate to the earlier discussion of comfort level/knowledge base of GOAL Students of Color. It is possible that, as with the lower numbers of familial participation in higher education, GOAL Students of Color may have fewer friends who have college experience. This could contribute to the increased reliance upon the institution for support.

CONCLUSION

As higher education becomes more diverse, the concerns and issues for students of color become central to student and institutional success. When conducting research on adult students, we need to be more conscious of the data we collect. As much as we would like to generalize and apply our findings to all adult students, I think we must be careful of assuming that we have tapped into the consciousness of the adult student when our data pool is less diverse than our classrooms.

This small case study only raises questions. It cannot provide final answers. More research needs to be done before we have a fuller picture. Just as there is not generic adult student, the generalized category of "Students of Color" cannot address all issues and concerns, because there are genuine differences between groups within this generic category. What can be drawn from this study is that there are differences, which should be acknowledged in future research.

As for the GOAL Program, this study concretizes anecdotal evidence that our academic advisors have amassed. In general, GOAL Students of Color require more of their advisors' time, have more anxiety about succeeding, and anticipate having more difficulties moving through the institutional system. They

also enter the Program with more expectation of major life changes upon completion of their degree. The other value of this study for the GOAL Program is the insights it provides in the area of pedagogy. This presentation has only touched on one aspect of this area in the section on support. If the support category of "Fellow Learner" is not as important for GOAL Students of Color, then how does our cohort-based program, which is expected to have support built into it, assist these students? Further study is required.

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